

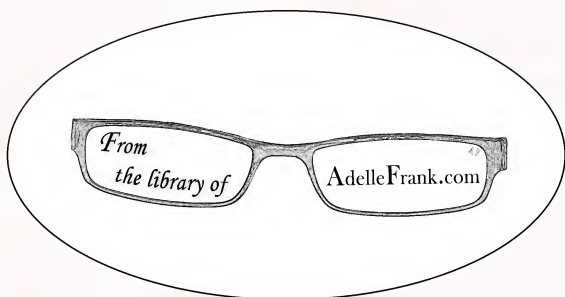
IN MEMORIAM

Minneva J. Neher

Alva C. Harsh

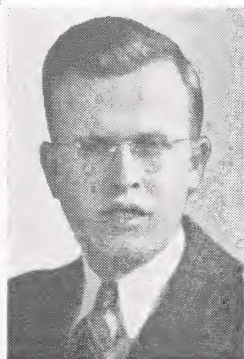
Mary Hykes Harsh

ANETTA C. MOW





Minneva J. Neher



Alva C. Harsh



Mary Hykes Harsh

IN MEMORIAM

MINNEVA J. NEHER

ALVA C. HARSH

MARY HYKES HARSH

Compiled

by

ANETTA C. MOW

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DEDICATED

to

THE PARENTS

of Minneva, Alva and Mary
who dedicated their children to the church
who entered with gladness
into their joys and triumphs

and

who drank the bitter cup of sorrow
when their lives were
sacrificed in service

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Introduction

It is with a deep sense of unworthiness that I attempt to write the introduction to this book written in honor of our three martyred missionaries, of whom "the world was not worthy." I deem it an honor and a sacred privilege, however, to be given this added opportunity to express my appreciation for having known these faithful followers of Christ, whose consecrated lives greatly inspired me. Minneva Neher was my faithful friend and companion, my fellow worker in the Lord, and my prayer partner over a period of ten years, through scenes dark and scenes bright. When the news of this tragedy was flashed across the world our beloved fraternity was shocked, to say nothing of the great sorrow that wrung the hearts of their parents and loved ones and the wider circle of friends. It seemed that in one brief moment the pleasant past had become a bitter memory!

Exactly six months had elapsed from the time Minneva and our Chinese friends had waved good-by to me from the platform of the Show Yang depot as I turned my face toward the homeland until the three of them, without so much as a wave of the hand or a cheery good-by to

their Chinese friends, fled from these earthly scenes and "spake with us on earth no more." Had the curtains veiling the future been pushed aside ten years ago, revealing the sorrow that was soon to visit our mission station and indicating that I would one day be penning these lines, I would have stood aghast, stunned and speechless! How wisely and graciously our heavenly Father withholds from us the knowledge of future events that would give us pain! He would have us "take no thought for the morrow" since the "morrow shall take thought for the things of itself."

Now as we take a backward look after all these years, we refuse to allow sad memories to dig new graves in this garden of sorrow, but we brush them aside instead, that our minds may gaze on the more glorious aspects of their mysterious and sudden flight from scenes terrestrial to scenes celestial. As it was said of Enoch, who walked with God, "He was not, for God took him," so might it be said of these faithful three who also "walked with Him" and did their work so well that it was completed while the sun of their day was still high, leaving the rest of us to toil on amid lengthening shadows. That massive wooden gate that opened into the street from the Show Yang mission compound had swung open many times to let the missionaries out into "the crowded ways of life," opening again to welcome them home at the close of a weary day, but on that fateful night it closed behind Minneva, Alva, and Mary Lou. They disappeared in the darkness and were off to their rest!

Introduction

"God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform," but there are no "accidents" with Him. We believe also that there are no "accidents" in the plans of those who keep in the center of His will. Tolstoi said, "Every man is immortal till his work is done," which would not mean so much, in our opinion, had not Christ Himself expressed the same truth in different words, "Are there not twelve hours in the day?" It was almost an obsession with Minneva to be always in the will of God, and we learned from the diaries written by the three of them, during those last difficult days, that no steps were taken, and no decisions made, without the assurance of divine guidance. They were answering the call of duty and were too conscientious to slight it; they could not turn back, even though it meant facing danger and death. They were like the coast guards who were warned of the danger of putting out to sea to rescue the passengers on a sinking ship and were told that they would never get back if they went out. Their only reply was, "We don't *have* to come back, but we *must* go out!" Our missionaries did not have to come back, and they did not!

For some wise purpose this grim tragedy has been shrouded in mystery; God has chosen to make it one of His deep secrets, but sometime we shall know. Could our mortal eyes have seen by some miracle what God has hidden from us, might we not have seen four instead of three weary travelers trudging their way through the jeering crowd, "numbered with the transgressors"? God never forsakes His own. He still walks with them through

the fiery furnaces, and the deep waters! Perhaps there was the flashing of a saber, or the brandishing of other weapons of death, but what was that compared with the glory that burst upon their sight in that next moment? How wonderful to step out of the back door of earth into the "front door" of heaven! Yes, one by one they appeared with the blood-washed throng, clad in robes of white. It was "'Goodnight' here, but 'good morning' up there"!

All human progress up to God
Has stained the stairs of time with blood
For every gain for Christendom
Is bought by someone's martyrdom,
Not ours alone,
Nor man's alone.

In furnace fire, a faithful three,
Though bound in chains, in spirit free;
A fourth drew near with shining feet
And walked with them through livid heat.
A king's defeat!
A king's defeat!

Ten thousand saints come thronging home,
From lion's den and catacomb;
The fire and sword and beasts defied;
For Christ their King they testified
And gladly died;
And gladly died.

Introduction

With eyes of faith we see today
That cross-led column wind its way
Up life's repeated Calvary.
Borne up by superhuman powers,
We rise to take the hill with ours.
O Christ, we follow Thee!
We follow Thee!*

V. Grace Clapper
Furloughed missionary to China

* The poem is but a part of one written by Mr. Rose, who was one of the eleven Baptist missionaries killed by the Japanese on Panay, Philippine Islands, in December 1943.

Preface

When the word of the disappearance of Minneva Neher and Alva and Mary Harsh came, a wave of sorrow surged over our entire church and everywhere friends were stunned. Such a cloak of uncertainty and confusion covered the whole tragic situation that everyone cried out for more facts, scarcely daring to hope that the report was not true.

Almost ten years have passed by since that terrible night when the three missionaries passed out through the Show Yang compound gate and never returned. They had gone in response to a call for help, as they had been led to believe; instead, they were led to their death.

Mystery still surrounds their disappearance. During these years almost no facts have been found which reveal the truth. It was hoped that when missionaries might again return to Shansi and when they could go back to Show Yang the facts would be learned, but that hope has not been fulfilled. This account of our missionary martyrs has been too long delayed with the hope that the truth might be discovered. Now that our missionaries in China have written saying that they cannot secure more information, this book is being published.

As in the warp and woof of individual life there are woven the threads of golden happiness and the weft of dark sorrow, so in the life of a church are woven joy and deep tragedy. In the history of the Church of the Brethren there have been times of great rejoicing and also times of testing and grief. The trials and persecution of Christopher Sauer, the death of Elder John Kline, the martyrdom of the thirteen Chinese Christians at Liao Chow, and the heroic witness of our missionaries who endured life in internment camps are some of the strands woven into the rich fabric and heritage of our church. We the members of our church must not forget these legacies. Should they not strengthen our faith?

With this purpose in mind this book has been prepared and made available to the entire brotherhood. May the beautiful overflowing lives of Minneva Neher and Alva and Mary Harsh continue to be a blessing both here in America and in China and may their heroic death always place a benediction upon the church they loved and served. May it help us everyone to love more devotedly the cause of Christ, for which they made the supreme sacrifice.

Anetta C. Mow

Elgin, Illinois

"I WILL TRUST AND NOT BE AFRAID"

<i>I will not be afraid.</i>	<i>His Word will stand for</i>
<i>I will not be afraid.</i>	<i>ever.</i>
<i>I will look upward,</i>	<i>His Word will stand for</i>
<i>And travel onward,</i>	<i>ever.</i>
<i>And not be afraid.</i>	<i>His truth—it shall be</i>
<i>He says He will be with me.</i>	<i>My shield and buckler,</i>
<i>He says He will be with me.</i>	<i>So I'm not afraid.</i>
<i>He goes before me,</i>	<i>He will give grace and glory.</i>
<i>And is beside me,</i>	<i>He will give grace and glory.</i>
<i>So I'm not afraid.</i>	<i>His cross before me,</i>
<i>His arms are underneath</i>	<i>His banner o'er me,</i>
<i>me.</i>	<i>So I'm not afraid.</i>
<i>His arms are underneath</i>	<i>He says He will do marvels.</i>
<i>me.</i>	<i>He says He will do marvels.</i>
<i>His hand upholds me,</i>	<i>Above our asking,</i>
<i>His love enfolds me,</i>	<i>Or even thinking,</i>
<i>So I'm not afraid.</i>	<i>So look up and praise.</i>

So we go singing onward.
So we go singing onward.
We're pressing upward,
We're marching Homeward
To Him, unafraid.

—G. E. M. Govan

Note: This gospel hymn found its way to China, where it was translated into Chinese and distributed by the Bible House of Tientsin. It was sent by friends to missionaries in Chinkiang, and everyone, both Chinese and foreigners, in that city began to sing it. It was sent to friends in Free China, and as the Christian students and soldiers there began to sing it, the non-Christians took it up. It became the marching song and gave courage to stalwart hearts.

Before the "Incident" at Show Yang

Some people seem ordained to fulfill a certain destiny and to complete an epic in their own lives and in the life of the church they serve by being called upon to descend into the deepest valleys of suffering, to wade the strong undercurrents of human endurance and to climb to the heights.

Such has been true concerning the three missionaries in the Church of the Brethren about whom this book is written. The names of Minneva J. Neher and Alva C. and Mary Hykes Harsh will ever remain engraved on the roster of the church and in the hearts of their friends as martyrs for the sake of Jesus Christ and His kingdom. They served in China as His ambassadors at a time when undeclared war ravished the land and when those who witnessed to the Christian way of life were in constant danger.

They lived in Shansi province, where the church had been working for thirty years. Their home was at Show Yang, which is located on the railway between Peiping and Tai Yuan. They knew that the Chinese people had always known great unrest and sorrow and yet they saw

that the Christian church had grown, and so they rejoiced and hoped for better days ahead.

Then came a darker cloud than they had ever known when the Japanese invaded China and terrible things began to happen all about them. The people heard the rumblings of war and the missionaries knew that just ahead lay greater sorrow and suffering for China than she had ever known before.

It was on July 7, 1937, that the incident occurred at the Marco Polo bridge which served as the match to light the flame of war between Japan and China. The bridge was near Peiping. The aggressor nation had long desired the portion of China where the Church of the Brethren was located because of its vast raw materials of coal and iron, and so Shansi soon became a dangerous battleground. Days of untold suffering lay ahead. The church was to be tried as by fire.

As if to be thrown into the midst of this outbreak of hostilities, Alva and Mary Harsh sailed for China in September 1936. They spent their first eight months in Peiping studying the Chinese language. These were wonderful days for them and they had the assurance that they were in the place the Lord intended them to be. In June 1937 they moved to Show Yang and began their work in the station which had been taken over from the English Baptists twenty years after it had passed through the terrors of the Boxer Uprising in 1900.

The Harshes loved their new home in Show Yang, Shansi. It was situated on a beautiful plateau where the

Before the "Incident" at Show Yang

chief industry was farming and where the people raised sheep and goats. They joined Minneva Neher, who had looked forward with eagerness to their coming. Even a small garden had been planted and cared for in anticipation of their coming and on arrival they enjoyed the ripe tomatoes and the Chinese muskmelon, which tasted quite good if enough sugar was put on it. On July 19 they moved into their study, which had been remodeled, and they considered this an outstanding event in their lives.

Minneva Neher had considered Show Yang her home from the time she went there first after her arrival in China in 1924. She made it her home as soon as she left Peiping, where she had given herself to language study. The great high walls of the Show Yang mission houses spoke to her of the suffering and torture of martyred Christians. Her prayers were ever that she and present-day Christians might be the seed of the church at that place. She gave her time and energy to educational and evangelistic work. After her furlough to the homeland in 1931, she returned to China refilled and rededicated to her task and again she lived at Show Yang. In every sense of the word it was returning home for her. Show Yang was very dear to her.

For five and a half months in the latter half of the year 1937, Minneva and the Harshes lived together at Show Yang and worked side by side in their mission service. At first they had seemed very far away and isolated from any external strife. Show Yang was a quiet place. It was hard to believe that fighting was going on and that

people were dying in other places. Frequently on Sunday mornings Minneva would bring the message of the gospel to the congregation. During the week, when they visited in the villages, they wrote home to their loved ones about the hemp, flax, peas, buckwheat, alfalfa, wheat, oats, corn and potatoes. They preached to the people and told them Bible stories and taught them songs. Crowds pressed in about them.

The Harshes wrote to their parents about an interesting experience in a small village near Show Yang as follows:

We went to the small village of Ching Chuan to a baptizing service. It was the first river baptism ever held in this area of the Show Yang station. Water in the rivers, or I should say in the small streams, is very scarce here; so they have always had baptisms in a baptistry or tank of some kind. But at this place the Chinese themselves decided it would be nice to have it in a stream. So they found a place about a mile from town where the water had cut a little pool right in the middle of the stone. All the water in the stream would easily have gone through a two-inch pipe, but the little pool was big enough to baptize in. There were five baptized. These folks were all converted by Chinese, for in this little town the Chinese carry on all their church services themselves. They have about thirty now and their own little church, which is a small room about ten by fifteen feet, and they fill it full. I suppose there were more than two hundred people present to see the baptism. And so the little Chinese churches are growing, but there are many villages which as yet have none.

In their own words they described the lovely land of China: God has made it all so beautiful and He has given to China's people things they can share with us to make our lives richer, and we in turn have much to share with them. And we have much in common.

Before the "Incident" at Show Yang

But soon their calm and peaceful tenor of living was changed. By late summer they began to realize the forward push of war and by September they confessed that war was on and that it was much worse than they had thought it could be. Planes were passing overhead although no bombs had yet been dropped. Chinese people who could afford to do so had prepared caves in the ground to which they could run for shelter in case bombs should be loosed upon them. On the insistence of local authorities and of Chinese friends, a cave had been prepared on the mission compound also. It was large enough to hold about seventy people. Already the question had been put to the missionaries whether they should leave China or stay, but they answered by saying, "Our Chinese Christians need leadership and help in times like these and we hope we may be able to help them and do our bit. Anyhow our lives are in God's hands and we might better be in the midst of a war working for His kingdom than in a war for any earthly kingdom."

AFRAID?

Selected by Grace Clapper in memory of Minneva J. Neher and
Alva and Mary Lou Harsh

*Afraid? Of what?
To feel the spirit's glad release?
To pass from pain to perfect peace,
The strife and strain of life to cease?
Afraid—of that?*

*Afraid? Of what?
Afraid to see the Savior's face,
To hear his welcome, and to trace
The glory gleam from wounds of grace?
Afraid—of that?*

*Afraid? Of what?
A flash—a crash—a pierced heart;
Darkness—light—O heaven's art!
A wound of his a counterpart!
Afraid? Of that?*

*Afraid? Of what?
To do by death what life could not—
Baptize with blood a stony plot,
Till souls shall blossom from the spot?
Afraid? Of that?*

—E. H. Hamilton
Missionary to China

Sorrow at Show Yang

But grave danger was nearer to the peaceful little city of Show Yang than they or anyone else had imagined. It was early in December of 1937 when the greatest tragedy which the China mission had ever known came to these three devoted missionaries, who had come to China to love and serve and share. It is believed that swiftly and suddenly they were put to death, and with such treachery and secrecy that even after these intervening years the details are not fully known. Perhaps the facts will never be known until the final curtains shall be pulled aside and the secrets of earth shall be revealed.

It was on December 2, 1937, about 7:30 in the evening when Minneva Neher, Alva and Mary Harsh walked out through the mission compound gate never to return. A girl had come asking the missionaries to come to her home to solve some problems. She was a Chinese girl who was the adopted daughter of a Japanese woman married to a Frenchman. He was a railway official who had lived at Show Yang from the time our mission opened work there. In all good faith they went with her. Doubtless the missionaries never knew that this request was but a

well-laid treacherous trap to lure them outside and into the hands of those who took their lives.

Two days later on Sunday morning the missionaries at Ping Ting, thirty miles east of Show Yang, were startled and distressed beyond all words when two messengers appeared telling them the tragic story that the Show Yang missionaries had not been seen since Friday night. Although the messengers had secured permits to go by train to their homes in near-by villages, nevertheless they risked their lives to continue on eastward to bring the word to the missionaries at Ping Ting.

They reported that a man and his wife were having a quarrel and their daughter came to take Miss Neher and the Harshes to the home to effect peace between them. This home was about a half mile distant from the mission compound, near the railway station. Alva Harsh had gone to the Japanese official stationed just across the street from the front gate of the mission and had received his consent for the three missionaries to go outside the compound walls at that time of day. An order had been issued by the Japanese military saying that no one should go on the street after dark without a permit from the Japanese officials. They had been careful to comply with all military regulations. It was after Minneva had been called out of prayer meeting, that the three of them left the mission house along with the girl and her Japanese escort dressed in Chinese civilian clothes. That was the last time they were seen by any of the Chinese Christians.

On that same day that they were informed of the trag-

edy Frank Crumpacker and Mary Schaeffer went by military pass on the train to Show Yang in order to investigate the matter as fully as possible. They did everything they could and made inquiry of everyone they dared to approach and yet they learned almost nothing. After two and a half days of search, Brother Crumpacker returned to Ping Ting to report to the missionaries and the Christian community. He also hurried to Peking and Tientsin to inform the United States ambassador and the consul. Anna Hutchison accompanied Crumpacker when he returned to Shansi. Sister Schaeffer remained at Show Yang and lived there alone for two weeks until Anna Hutchison could come from Tientsin to join her. All the missionaries' hearts were broken with grief and they felt very helpless because there was so little they could do.

It took a long time before the word of this tragedy reached others of the missionaries as they were scattered about at their various stations. Some did not learn of their death for two months, although the distance between them was less than fifty miles. To some the information came by word of mouth which had passed among the soldiers of the Chinese army.

The first word to reach America and the offices of the General Mission Board came on December 13 by way of the Associated Press in Chicago. It stated that word had come from London, England, reporting that three missionaries, Alva Harsh and wife and Minneva Neher, had disappeared from Show Yang. Daily papers throughout the United States carried this news the next day and

radios announced it. On the next morning the church headquarters office received the following telegram from the State Department at Washington, D. C.:

Department regrets to inform you that a telegram from American Embassy, Peiping, December twelfth, reports that Mr. F. H. Crumpacker of the Church of the Brethren Mission at Ping Ting on the Taiyuan Shihchiachuang Railway informed the Embassy today of the disappearance the evening of December second of the American citizens Mr. and Mrs. Alva Harsh and Miss Minneva J. Neher of the Church of the Brethren Mission at Shou Yang, which is between Ping Ting and Taiyuan. The Harshes' home address is Petersburg, West Virginia; that of Miss Neher is La Verne, California. Mr. Crumpacker heard on December fifth of the disappearance and went that day to Ping Ting [we presume they mean Show Yang]. He was informed by Chinese of the Mission that the three Americans left the mission at 7:30 P.M. to walk half a mile to the house of a Frenchman and never returned. The daughter of the Frenchman claims that they were at the house for half an hour and then set out for the mission. Reputable Chinese of the town when questioned stated that they had no knowledge of the presence of Chinese irregulars in the vicinity at that time. If this is true, the motive of the persons who caused the disappearance is obscure. The Embassy reports representations have been made to the appropriate authorities with the request that all possible measures be taken to discover the whereabouts of the three missionaries and their present condition.—Cordell Hull.

It seemed quite evident that this information, although not correct in every detail, had come from Frank Crumpacker to the Chinese embassy and had been relayed to Mr. Hull. The secretary of the Mission Board sent letters and wires to the families of the missing missionaries.

On January 10, 1938, a letter written by Crumpacker arrived. His heart was too torn to write in long detail.

He could give only the same information which had come through the State Department. The missionaries in China were sore distressed as they tried to discover the motive for this mystery. They could think only of the good and kind deeds which their comrades had always shown in their work. Later the United States embassy sent representatives to Show Yang to make careful investigation, but no additional information could be secured. The promise was made that further investigations would be made when hostilities had subsided.

Everything connected with their disappearance seemed baffling. Naturally stories and rumors were passed around in great secrecy, but no one could prove them. A relative of one of the Christians who lived in the mountains near Show Yang told his family that he had been working for the Japanese in the barracks at Show Yang at the time of the tragedy and had seen the three missionaries killed. He said that after the Japanese should leave the region he could point out the place where they were buried. At one time the report was spread that they had met death at the hands of Chinese communists far up in the north-eastern section of Shansi province. It was only a rumor. Other stories were also told, such as the account that Alva Harsh had been seen on December 3 in a railway coach held by Japanese soldiers. A missionary from a neighbor mission thought she had recognized Harsh as he seemed to be brought back to Show Yang from a railway junction at Yang Chuan. There was no way of proving or disproving any of these reports.

THE WORTH OF A LIFE

*The worth of a life is the good we may do,
The helping hand and a heart that is true;
Not the number of years we live and toil,
Not the money placed in banks or in soil.*

*In the U. S. A. and in China, too,
Minneva led all to the Christ she knew;
And prayed that they would serve him, too,
While God gave them life, so to do.*

*It seems I can see her beckoning hand
Challenging all of our Christian band
To hold the banner of Jesus high,
Though in his name some have to die.*

*My Christian friends, our world is in need
Of much more than formal code or creed;
Now is the time to live and serve,
That love, peace, and happiness may never swerve.*

—Mrs. O. R. Hersch, Manassas, Virginia

Three Hearts for China

How many times is the comment made that death seems to select those who are ready to go. This same remark has been repeated frequently in connection with the going of the three missionaries who had given their hearts so fully to China. There is something so similar in their love for Christ and in their loyalty to His church and His service that it makes the statements of their purpose in life sound very much alike. In their devotion, in their spiritual insight, in their belief in prayer, and in their active faith they resembled one another. And all three had a lovely sense of appreciation and a happy buoyancy of spirit which made them winsome. All three had many friends who loved them for themselves.

The remainder of this chapter gives in short form the life stories of these three missionaries.

MINNEVA J. NEHER

Minneva J. Neher was born in Inglewood, California, on October 22, 1896. She was the third child of William H. and Lottie Flory Neher. Her twin sisters were her seniors and her brother her junior in age. The Neher family lived in Inglewood until Minneva was seventeen

years of age, then they moved to McFarland. Later they moved to La Verne and here her mother is still living; her father died on October 21, 1946.

When Minneva had completed the grammar school course she attended the Inglewood union high school, La Verne (Lordsburg) Academy and the Delano high school. After teaching school one year she entered La Verne College and received her A. B. degree in 1919. She enjoyed her schoolwork and responded enthusiastically to all the opportunities which it brought to her. She was always an *A* student. Her college life was marked by a well-balanced interest in all its activities. She greatly enjoyed taking part in literary groups and in debating organizations.

Her Christian home gave her a rich heritage, and because of the love and devotion for the church which she found in her home she loved spiritual things. It was the natural and normal custom to attend Sunday-school and church services regularly. It was instinctive with her to desire to enter into full church fellowship when she was yet a small child. In 1907, when eleven years of age, she was baptized and her name was placed on the Inglewood church register.

According to her custom, she took an active part in the Sunday school and taught a primary class in the Redondo Beach mission.

As a small girl Minneva had the desire to be a missionary. All her background had nurtured this aspiration and many experiences added up to make it the underlying

purpose of her life. When she was twelve years old an event occurred which greatly increased her eagerness to become a missionary. This was the visit of her cousin, Frank H. Crumpacker, who was then under appointment to go to China to open a mission field. His pioneer spirit and his eagerness made a deep imprint on Minneva's heart. She too wanted to give her service to China in the name of Christ. Although sixteen years were to pass by before she would be on her way to China, she kept her hope high and read every letter and every report about the work of the mission in Shansi. She was preparing herself during these years to feel at home among the people of that vast land when at last her dreams should be realized. Nor did she wait until her feet should touch foreign soil to begin mission work; while in college, as an earnest student volunteer, she served in many missionary groups among the people of other races in her own home town.

Believing that she should have the best Biblical training possible in her preparation to be a missionary, in 1919 Minneva went to Chicago and entered Bethany Bible School, later named Bethany Biblical Seminary. Her three years in the great midwestern city were years of rich experiences. As in college, so in Bethany she entered heartily and fervently into all the activities which she felt would prepare her for the most efficient service. She served in both the County Home and the County Hospital. Both of these places teemed with people who needed the best she had to give and she rejoiced to give all she had to them. So completely did she believe in the

idea of the Christian life being a growing life that she expected hers to be renewed and refilled every day. She learned to know God better as each day passed and daily to love His will in a fuller way.

She was chosen as traveling secretary of the United Student Volunteer Movement of the Church of the Brethren in 1921 and 1922. She visited all the college volunteer groups and this experience brought added insight and blessing into her life and into the lives of many young people throughout the church. Through her influence at this time, at least one missionary family, the Ikenberys, reached the China field several years earlier than they had thought possible. In her own words she gave her reason for being a volunteer and for encouraging others:

When I think of what Jesus means to me and of what he is and what he has done—why am I a volunteer? ‘The love of Christ constraineth me.’

‘I heard him call, ‘Come, follow,’ that was all;
My gold grew dim, my heart went after him,
Who would not follow if you heard him call?’

The year 1922-1923 Minneva spent in her home in La Verne and then in 1924 she returned to Chicago. Being desirous of preparing herself in every possible way to become a good and efficient missionary, she spent the last year before sailing in nurse’s training in Bethany Hospital. Her fellow nurses loved her for her cheerfulness. Everyone who has taken nurse’s training knows how crowded days and nights become and how difficult it is to live at an even keel. But in the midst of rushing

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duties Minneva was able to keep her twinkling eyes and reassuring smile. Her roommate of those days recalls the experience of the evening before Minneva was to receive her cap and pass from the probation period on to the next class. She was carrying a message from the hospital to a near-by home when she stumbled on an unseen stick and broke her right arm. Not only did she suffer pain but she found that, having her right arm in a cast, it was impossible to comb her hair, dress herself, or even eat in her usual manner. Yet most of all it was hard and lonely to be in a hospital when her longed-for training must be discontinued. She enjoyed reading but could not enjoy reading all day for weeks. It was then that she began writing on the typewriter with her left hand and that she wrote an interesting playlet about Bethany Hospital which has been used to show the value of a Christian hospital. It was interesting to note how Minneva turned this handicap to usefulness, which trait, I think, was characteristic of her life.

Then came August 14, 1924. This was the great day toward which Minneva had looked for years. She was answering Christ's call. Just before setting sail with her several traveling companions she wrote these lines to C. D. Bonsack, secretary of the General Mission Board: "I want to tell you I appreciate it more than I can tell that I have the privilege of going out to China under our General Mission Board. I want always in my work to be true and loyal to you."

Soon after arrival Minneva entered language school

in Peiping and she was busy with her study during the next two years. Even the grind of difficult study proved a joy for her. While she was learning the Chinese language she was also learning to appreciate the Chinese people. She told her American friends about the Chinese in the following words:

My respect and admiration for the Chinese has grown by leaps and bounds since learning to know them as I see them here in Peking. Our language teachers are a means of introducing us to the cultured Chinese class. We respect our Chinese teachers as much as any teachers we ever had at home. Indeed, I think I can truly say I have seen some of the best demonstrations of teaching ability and pedagogical psychology which I have observed in all my school experience. The Chinese are a splendid people and I am happy to be among them.

Just as she had always shouldered duties when in Sunday school, in school, in college and in the hospital, so as soon as she could speak a bit in Chinese she took upon herself the task of teaching a Sunday-school class. Her heart went out to some little tots under school age for whom there was no special class and she decided to try what she could do even with her limited language. She found it great fun and very good practice. She was surprised how well the children understood her in spite of her funny mistakes.

When Minneva had been in China just three years she expressed her unbounded joy in words which show that none of the thrill of being a missionary had worn off.

I was so happy today I could have shouted. Instead I breathed a prayer of thanksgiving. Last winter after Chinese New Year, I began teaching the wife of our buyer to read the Chinese char-

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acter. We used the little book, "Easy Steps to Great Truths." She has made splendid progress and has been so eager to learn that it has been a privilege and a joy to teach her. Even while I was away she continued to study. Today the little woman's face fairly beamed as she told me how she was telling one of the neighbors what she was learning and that she had been pleading with them to turn from their gods to the true and living God. She also told me that since she is seeing the truth more clearly, her heart is burdened for her relatives back in her home village where they are most zealous in idol worship.

Can you wonder that I am happy? When a person begins to tell the neighbors about a new-found joy and becomes burdened for her own home people, we know that the truth is taking hold on the heart.

According to a mission conference decision, Minneva was located at Show Yang and this mission station was to be her home during the remaining years of her life. She entered her new home with the same enthusiasm she had always shown in every undertaking. She considered it unmeasured joy to enter into the missionary service for which she had been preparing. Those were stormy days—those early days in her service—for civil war was on between the Shansi army and Honan troops. Bandits made life exciting and dangerous. Yet Minneva was never happier than when she went on long trips over the Shansi hills with her fellow missionary, Mary Schaeffer, and the Bible woman, Mrs. Kung. They visited in homes, bringing the message of love and goodwill and teaching better methods of living. When they entered some villages where the Western foreigner had never been seen before they were objects of much curiosity.

It was not long until she had learned the countryside and had become acquainted with many friends. Long miles were covered on foot and Minneva learned to ride on donkies. This was a feat worth writing about to her parents and she told them how she returned from a village alone on donkeyback. On one occasion when returning home she was caught in a hard rainstorm. She describes it in her own words:

By the time we reached the top of the ridge drops were falling and there was a distant roll of thunder. This gave me a feeling of concern for I remembered what terrific storms we have had this summer. I breathed a prayer to be kept safe whatever came. I had been walking on ahead of the animal; so I stopped and waited, but before he caught up with me the storm broke. Luckily, I had an umbrella and a big oiled cloth cover. I stooped down as low as possible under my umbrella. The wind was blowing and the rain was coming down in torrents. Water was soon running in every direction. I was very thankful that we were on the upgrade rather than on the downgrade on the other side of the ridge of the mountain.

We waited until the worst of the storm was over and then we made our way slowly and carefully through the mud, slush and water for some ten *li* [3 1/3 miles] down to the village at the foot of the mountain. Here we found an inn and we were thankful to be near the warm brick *k'ang*.*

But I was not at ease for I was the only woman. I made bold to ask the innkeeper to find a place where I might stretch out my cot. He told me I might put it up right on the same hot *k'ang* where I was sitting and the men could occupy the other side of the room. Again I insisted that I have another room, even without fire. Finally it was decided that the men depart to another house and I might have the room to myself. That suited me very well. However, there were holes in the paper windows which did not pre-

* A *k'ang* is a brick platform used as a bed. It can be heated by a fire underneath.

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vent a cat from coming in and scaring me half out of my wits. It continued to rain steadily throughout the night.

The morning did not look very promising, but we decided to move forward. As we went on the sky cleared and soon it was blue and pretty. But the roads were terrible. I walked the greater part of the way and it was about one-thirty when I reached home. I was very tired and hungry and I soon fried some potatoes and eggs and had a bite to eat. I had not really had a proper meal since the morning of the day before.

Minneva enjoyed beautiful things and she found real pleasure in arranging her room so that it was comfortable and pretty. In one of her letters to her mother she said:

I wish you could peep into my newly fixed bedroom. I am quite proud of it. I have the walls done in pale green and the ceiling in white. The furniture and woodwork are all in ivory color. The floor is oak color. It does make a very nice room. I have made new curtains with some flowered challie which I had on hand. There was enough to make covers for each of my trunks and for the cushions on the chairs. The curtains are pink-flowered; so everything harmonizes very nicely. My bedroom is my "refuge." My study is my place of work; my bedroom is my place for quiet and rest.

She had a high standard for her use of the Chinese language. It is a most difficult language to master, as everyone knows. After the formal classwork and study in classes it is necessary that missionaries keep reviewing and studying. After she had been on the field five years she was still busy preparing for examinations which would finish her fourth-year work and finish the study that would give her the necessary credits on her fifth year of study. She attacked this grinding task with the same high hope with which she faced all her work.

Long before her first term of service was over, she had learned a very significant truth. She summed it up in these words: "I have been made aware of the truth that 'our work in missions is not to get things done but to help souls grow.'" The consciousness of such truths gave her keen insight into methods of work. She prayed that she might always be aware and alert and yet be steadied by experience and the proper amount of caution. Even before she started back to America on her furlough she petitioned the Father that nothing should hinder her return to her work in China, for, as she said: "My heart is here and I love the Chinese people."

Minneva's furlough in the homeland in 1931-1932 was packed with much happiness. She enjoyed to the brim all contacts with parents, loved ones and friends. It was a time of refilling for her. It was also a time of rededication for her work in China. She visited the churches of her home district as well as many others. Every visit stood out as a rich experience.

America seemed very precious to her even though she was constantly thinking of China. She had almost forgotten how delightful some experiences could be. When she heard the college Sunshine Quartette sing her heart welled up with emotion. Good music refreshed her soul. She was deeply touched when she saw the missionary story of *The Lost Sheep* given by the La Verne missionary society. Although the setting was in India, Minneva was thinking China. It took her back to the villages where the women were waiting for "the messenger of God who

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cometh late." And when she had the rare privilege of hearing two great Christian ministers, one from Japan and one from China, speak, she felt that they had spoken the message of Christ for America and for all the world. Annual Conference was another happy experience for her.

Minneva tried to crowd into that year and a half while at home every good thing possible in order that she might be better prepared for her work when she should return to China. China and the Chinese people were uppermost in her mind. She was eager to return and August 22, 1932, was an outstanding date for her when she turned her face across the Pacific and started back to China. She thought her cup of happiness had been filled to the brim many times before, but now it overflowed.

She herself said that her joy was too great to be measured when she reached China and was back at Show Yang unpacking her trunks, being hindered almost continuously with calls from her Chinese friends.

So soon did she find herself back in the schedule of work after returning to China that it was hard for her to realize that there had been a break in the work.

Her days were busy ones and her schedule became heavier with the years. There were the principalship of the school at Show Yang, the class in phonetics, leading of chapel services a couple of times each week, serving on committees, acting as mission secretary, directing daily vacation Bible schools, writing articles for the church paper and doing village work.

The oversight and direction of services in several surrounding villages was a part of Minneva's work, and it was considered a time of special pleasure when she went out to the village group. Ching Chuan was one of these villages. There seemed to be a special concern for these people and she gave of time, strength and talent freely. How she would rejoice if she could read the report which Wendell Flory gave concerning the Ching Chuan group in the spring of 1947. He said:

The group of Christians at Ching Chuan headed by Deacon Ho Yu Kou has been one of the most successful groups of our church to carry on during the war. During this past year they invited H. C. Yin over twice for periods of a week each to hold meetings and Bible study with them. Attendance regularly is about thirty. The fellowship is warm and alive. On Thanksgiving Day of 1946, Brother Yin, Ernest Wampler, and I went to Ching Chuan to conduct a love feast and communion service for them. Twenty-three took part in the service. One of the features of the service was the first use made of the beautiful communion set of individual cups, and beautiful glass platters for the bread, that had been given to them by the Japanese pastor, Rev. Yuan Tien, before he left Shansi at the end of the Japanese war.

Minneva might well praise God that hers had been the opportunity to sow the good seed which would bring forth a good harvest.

The Christmas season always stood out in Minneva's life as a time of exuberant gladness as far as her own happiness was concerned. The only thing that could mar its perfect joy was the knowledge that everyone was not equally blessed and happy. It was during the Christmas-tide of 1929 that she and Mrs. Wu went to the home of

a Christian woman who lived inside the city. It was a bitterly cold day and the wind was blowing an icy blast that made them long for the warmth of the fireside.

On the street they met some beggar children who were shivering from the cold. They begged for money, but the women had no money with them. Minneva asked them where they lived, for she had been wanting to see the homes of the beggars who were so often on the street. The children said their homes were far away and they did not seem eager to have the Christians go to them.

After having the little service in the home to which they had planned to go, they left, going homeward by way of the west city. They wanted to invite a woman they had not seen for months to come to the church on Christmas Day. On the way they met a couple of beggar women and again they invited themselves to the beggar homes. The women consented to take them and they all walked together through the streets. The way was long and Minneva and her companion began to think that they would never reach the place. The wind all the while was chilling them to the bone, for it was zero weather. Finally they came to the place where the beggars stayed. They stood before some open caves in the dirt cliffs and there they saw how these folks—little babies and small children as well as adults, twenty-five in all—were existing in zero weather without fire, except as they kept a little blaze alive with grass, cornstalks and other such fuel. There were no beds but the earthen floor and very little bedding. Their food they got by begging. They

found out that these beggars were flood refugees from Honan province. Their crops had been destroyed and all they could do was to come to Shansi and pass the winter begging.

Minneva was touched with their need and she promised that she would be back the next day. On the following day she took some Chinese Christians along with her and they took millet and articles of clothing to the families. She bought several pounds of peanuts to give to the children and she gave them some scrapbooks hoping that they would help to gladden their hearts. Only one old grandmother was at home with the children, for all the women had gone away to beg. Minneva sat down on the millet bags they had brought and waited until the women should return, for she wanted to have a short gospel service with them. In the meantime the children enjoyed the peanuts.

After Minneva had waited a long time the women all returned and then she told the Christmas story and prayed. She then invited them to come to her home on Christmas Day.

And come they did! Minneva went to the gate to bring them in. It was a strange sight. The beggars had tried to "fix up" a bit, but they were tattered and torn. Minneva took the motley crowd into her study and, as she said, she had the time of her life entertaining them the rest of that Christmas Day. She divided the remains of her dinner with them, giving each a plate. Feeling that it did not make a very big dinner for the group of

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twenty-three, she opened another can of peaches so that each one might have a nice helping of the fruit and cake. Little bags of treats were given to each one and some wooden toys were given to the children. During the afternoon the old, old story of Jesus and His love was told, and everyone felt that it had been a very happy Christmas.

The experience of those days lingered long in Minneva's mind and she longed to do more. She wrote to a friend: "The pitiful need of these people has weighed on me. I know that these are just a few of the many hundreds who suffer for food and shelter all over this land this bitter winter."

In the midst of her giving she remembered that the children of American churches had made it possible for her to share these gifts with the needy in China and she did not fail to write letters of thanks to them.

No greater happiness was hers than when she made some child comfortable and happy. The following story is told of a little girl who was desperately poor and needed help. When Minneva learned that the child's mother had no means of getting warm clothes for her she bought the necessary cloth and cotton and sewed up the seams on the machine by lamplight. Then she sent the material over to the Chinese doctor's wife to put the cotton inside the garment. The doctor's wife added a pair of stockings and pretty shoes. Minneva said that when the bundle was given to the child the look of appreciation in the little one's eyes was all the thanks she wanted.

It was another evidence of Minneva's deep concern for everyone in need when she made herself responsible for a little crippled girl named Li Jung Lien. When asked why she took this little child she replied, "Because nobody wanted her." Minneva saw in her a lovable child who needed special care. This care was given by making it possible for her to live in a Christian Chinese home and attend school at Ping Ting. Minneva did not feel it would be wise to attempt to rear her in American fashion.

Just a week later, on New Year's Day, a wee baby girl was born to one of the poor refugee women. Minneva had been so deeply concerned for the mother that she brought her to the mission hospital. To Minneva it was unthinkable that a baby could be born and live in one of those cold dirt caves. In the hospital the woman was provided with clothes, a comforter and even a pillow and when the baby came it wore little garments made out of Minneva's worn bathrobe. Later on the mother and the child moved to another town where they would try their luck at begging. To Minneva all of this was sheer tragedy and her heart was deeply moved. Often she cried out, "Oh, that these people might have the surplus that goes to waste in my homeland!"

Love for the beautiful and the wholesome cheer of life was strong in Minneva's nature. When opportunity permitted her to go for a vacation in the mountains, she enjoyed the grandeur of nature all about her. She was observant. Clouds, flowers, birds, trees and the bubbling streams all brought her delight.

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By the river at Pei Ho she also saw the big god sitting facing her as she sat on the parapet while hidden away in a quiet place preparing a talk to give at the evening service.

It seems unusually fortunate to have the account of her trip to Wu Tai (five level-topped mountains) in July, less than six months before the fateful December 2, 1937. There were ten missionaries in the group. Alva and Mary Harsh were on their first tour among the mountains of Shansi. Minneva's description reveals her enjoyment of nature and her delight in being one of the group.

Here we are sitting on top of this part of the world. It is very clear; so we can see out in all directions. It was hard traveling to get here. We were a tired party when we reached Tai Huai Chen, which is in the heart of the Wu Tai Mountains. We put up in a temple for a couple of days and had fair accommodations. It rained all day long on the second day, so that gave us a good chance to rest. On the third day most of the group went hiking to see temples. It was most interesting to see the Buddhist monks at worship and to hear their chants. These mountains are considered to be the most famous mountains in the world among the Buddhists. The Wu Tai are five peaks. One morning we went to the top of the north peak, which is the highest peak. It was some climb to get there. I stayed on the mule most of the way.

The temple on this peak was very small. We had the unique experience of spending the night among men and women, monks and pilgrims all in the small temple room in the presence of all the idols. We missionaries had a little vesper service and we gathered in a spot where we could look down on the world.

That night as we went to our rest, five of the smaller women slept on a small k'ang. Mrs. Crumpacker and I lay down on our cots, but we did very little sleeping. Some forty pilgrims came in and could have only one brick bed. There was much confusion all night long. My cot was next to a regular thoroughfare. At half

past three the prayer bell rang and the monks assembled for prayer. We tried to sleep amidst their chanting but did not succeed.

I have enjoyed the beautiful sunsets and the early sunrises. The sun comes up very early and sets late on such high mountains. I have enjoyed this time of rest and quiet.

She was equally happy when she entered into joyous occasions with people. Sometimes it might be a wedding. She missed nothing of the details: the bridal chair, pink wedding garments, the do of the hair, the wedding breakfast, and the giving of gifts.

Or it might be her own birthday when the missionary boys surprised her and gave her "thirty-four panks."

In her tender love for a Chinese girl named Kuo Shu Hui, for whom she was deeply concerned, helpful lines would spring from her heart. Minneva put it this way:

I had an inspiration to write a little message to Shu Hui yesterday.

TO MY FRIEND

God keep you, my friend,
The way is hard and steep,
The devil is doing his best to hurt you.
Oh, Lord Jesus, protect my friend.

God give you faith
Strong, high and clean;
God give you hope for a star
To lighten your future path.

Better still, may God give you the power to love
That your heart may be warmed, that your strength may be strong,
To cultivate the spirit of patient endeavor,
To persevere in putting down self and holding up Jesus.

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Lord Jesus, Thou lovest my friend,
Thou hast prepared for her happiness a thousandfold.
In Thy hands difficulties are changed.
Oh, Lord, comfort and help my friend.

Lord Jesus, lead my friend,
Today she is at the turning of the way.
Before lies danger, behind is difficulty.

God keep you, friend,
Though the road be hard and steep,
Do not be careless about the Savior's call.
Oh, Lord Jesus, protect my friend.

This friend later married a soldier and became step-mother to a small child. She with her husband and others fled from Show Yang when the Japanese came in October 1937. For a long while nothing was heard about her or her whereabouts, but in recent years Kuo Shu Hui has written to some of the missionaries and to Minneva's mother. Her home is in Tai Yuan. She says her husband is a Christian. This fact would have rejoiced Minneva's heart for then she would have known that her efforts and prayers in Jung Lien's behalf were not in vain.

When the deputation came from the home church in 1935, Minneva found pleasure in every experience connected with this visit. The beautiful candlelighting service at the close of their China Jubilee was impressive as it illustrated the spread of the light of Jesus Christ to all of the stations in the mission.

Nor did she fail to see the funny side when Leland Brubaker took moving pictures of the work and of the several missionaries. She smiled happily as she thought of

those pictures being shown in the churches in America.

A sense of humor has always been considered a splendid asset for any missionary. Minneva had a good share of wholesome wit. This was evident many times. One evening she and several Chinese Christians were in a village where the people had never seen a Westerner before. In a few moments they were surrounded and were about to be crushed. As they worked their way back with crowds of children following them Minneva said she felt like the Pied Piper of Hamelin. And true to the illustration she led them to the court where they were staying and began to teach the youngsters to sing Christian songs.

Although the greater proportion of Minneva's experiences seemed to be on the gladsome side of life, nevertheless there were also problems and testings, pain and sorrow. Who, even with her cheery disposition, could be unconcerned when her eyes were threatened with the dreaded trachoma so prevalent throughout China, causing blindness among thousands?

There were also the days when she faced an impending operation and there were the five weeks which followed when she was in the hospital. Buoyant courage and faith helped her to make a good recovery. When the gaunt enemy, tuberculosis, walks by one's side, it is difficult to forget one's fears, but Minneva came through those hours of testing with renewed strength and quickened spirit.

Every type of project which might be helpful to the Chinese people interested Minneva. She believed most

thoroughly in helping the people to help themselves. In the women's classes it was her chief concern to show the women how to do things. She said that practical demonstration was always better than mere theoretical discussion. In the classes she showed how to prepare food for babies and had the women to do it themselves.

At first the Chinese folks were not favorable to the use of bean milk, but the missionaries would not be discouraged. Minneva felt it wise to start on a small scale and demonstrate the value of the bean milk by giving it to a few children and others who needed it badly for extra nourishment. She tried it out in the mission house and pronounced it good as a milk substitute.

Diligently did she labor with opium patients at an outstation. And much time was given to evangelistic work in outstations in the Show Yang area. She and her group of workers would spend two to three months at a time in the country. Minneva always felt that this work was of great value. She was quick to see certain evidences of the Spirit's working. The following testimonies are copied from her notes:

I had a most happy time in one of the villages this spring [1937]. I believe it was one of the happiest times I have enjoyed in China. I went to co-operate with the Christians there. It was a new experience to work into the program as they planned it. It cheered my heart to see the way they are moving ahead in their little church. I was invited to lead a week's meetings for the Christians and inquirers. The Lord did bless abundantly above what we asked or expected. I hardly knew what to do when seven stayed one night for special prayer, but the Lord knew. Most of them found the Lord and entered into the joy of salvation.

The Holy Spirit works through Bro. Ho Yu Kou in behalf of the little group. He is one of the leading Christians in their midst. What an inspiration he was to me. It was a joy to work with him. He is another example of what the Lord can do with a life fully surrendered to Him. As deacon, he is really a shepherd of the group.

Last Saturday the Harshes and I were out to a love feast at Ching Chuan. There were thirty-two who communed and we had a very good meeting. We enjoyed the fellowship with the folks so much. That little church is moving forward under the leadership of Ho Yu Kou. The Spirit of the Lord is at work. Just recently they had a baptism in the river. This was the first baptism in that village. Some twenty families have moved to the village from Shih Chia Chuang, so now there are a hundred or more people in their village. They want us to send someone out to help in work among the women. They feel the opportunity for good has never been better. I hope the Lord will open the way for either myself or someone else to go to help.

Early in the fall of 1937 the three missionaries at Show Yang—Minneva and Alva and Mary Harsh—began to realize more and more the movement of soldiers and the dangers of war. The incident at the Marco Polo bridge early in July had been like placing fire to tinder. People in towns and small villages were fleeing and runaway soldiers were making demands. In Show Yang itself the people were leaving their homes and many were coming to the missionaries for help and protection. They begged the missionaries to store possessions for them. The missionaries were perplexed to know what was the wisest thing to do.

In October a telegram came from the American consul in Peking instructing the missionaries to place American

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flags on the roofs of mission buildings. Minneva and Mary Harsh worked for two days making a flag ten feet long.

Previous to this a safety cave had been dug on the mission compound. Before that they had fled to a near-by village on three different days when enemy bombers passed over. More Chinese sought safety on the compound. Minneva had eleven Chinese girls and women with her and they all slept in one room.

These were days when Minneva said that she lived in Psalm 91. She found God's promises very precious as she trusted in the Lord. They knew that dangers had been very near. They were much in prayer.

Some Japanese officials called upon them and assured them that they would help to get food should it be needed. The missionaries also felt that the Japanese were doing all they could to protect them and the mission property. Mention was even made of the courteous and kind way in which the Japanese officers treated them. The missionaries sent some letters out by the hands of the Japanese officers. One Japanese officer stayed all night with the Harshes. He said he was a Christian and had spent four years in America. He spoke English very well.

The last letter which Minneva's parents ever received from her was written on December 2, 1937, the day she disappeared. She had sent the letter out to Tientsin by a Japanese official, who mailed it to America. It is given as she wrote it:

I have another opportunity to send a note through to you; so

will send you word again. How I long to get some word from all of you! I know you are doubly anxious about me so am taking advantage of any opportunity that shows itself of getting messages through. So far, we have no other way than through Japanese officials. I sent a letter to you on November 11 which was supposed to have gone to Japan through military and be mailed from there to you.

Today marks a month since the Japanese entered our town. Our mission compound has continued as a haven under the protection of God. The last couple of weeks we have been made to rejoice as we have been able to get in touch with our Christians and get many of the women and girls back into our fold here. It has been marvelous and faith-strengthening to hear the various experiences of them all and how the Lord has kept and protected. So far as we have been able to learn, none of the Christians have been killed or injured although many of them have suffered the loss of their homes and personal belongings. We have now within our court over one hundred of our church people or their relatives. Besides this, we have about as many of the leading gentry, merchants and officials living here at present. They are here at our invitation and have succeeded in effecting an organization which takes the place of the county government. They work, of course, in connection with the Japanese authorities. Their being here is giving us the most unique opportunity to preach the gospel that I have seen since I have been in China as many of these folks never had anything to do with the mission before. Now they are most grateful for the protection that our court affords and thus are able to help get things organized so that the needs of the Japanese army can be supplied. And also help to get folks back into the city again. This has been a most forlorn and desolate place, but it is beginning to be better just a bit now. We have had troop movement to and fro which greatly aggravated the problem of getting folks back.

The Lord has been graciously supplying all our needs. We have been able to get a good supply of millet and more coal and we trust that when this supply is used, He will have another way to meet our need. We are living comfortably within our little haven. How

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thankful we are that we did not go away and that we are here to take advantage of the great opportunity which is here. Each evening we are having evangelistic services and they are well attended and we believe the Lord is at work. We are praying and trusting that His name may be greatly honored through the experiences through which we have passed and are passing. I cannot write much in detail as we want to send several letters and cannot burden the official with too much bulk. You can rest your heart that I am well and safe and have everything I need. Oh, yes, even my cook got back several days ago, for which I was most thankful as I have done my own work for almost a month.

It will be past Christmas before you get this, but I trust you may all have had a very happy time together again. With love and a prayer for you all, I am yours, happy in His service for these needy people.

After finishing Minneva's letter, it seems pertinent to point out the fact that she continually prayed for wisdom and discretion. In her reliance on God's care she wanted to do everything that she could do to help answer her own petitions. It seems worthy of note to state that about two weeks before the tragedy occurred, Frank Crumpacker had made the trip from Ping Ting to Show Yang to see how the three missionaries were faring under Japanese rule. He found them well and cheerful in spite of the great strain to which they were being subjected. He gave them good advice and warned them not to leave the mission compound day or night under any circumstances. Hence it would seem that when the call for help came to them on the night of December 2, they must have felt it was the call of duty. Those who know the habit of the three in seeking divine guidance in all things believe that they sought such guidance on that fateful night.

Naturally too, having obtained special permission from the Japanese high command, they felt they were safe in going.

On his same visit, Minneva asked Brother Crumpacker about the advisability of burying some surplus mission money for safe keeping. Since she did not know the habits of the Japanese soldiers who filled the town she feared there might be looting. He told her that it might be a good idea and that she should be sure that the Harshes knew about the place in case such a plan was carried out. A few days over two weeks later Brother Crumpacker came back to unravel the mysterious disappearance and to find, if possible, clues which would reveal some facts. In looking over the mission records and finance statements he saw that a sum of \$1,700 was not there. Immediately he recalled what Minneva had said about burying money. He went into the back yard first, searching for a place where leaves or the ground had been recently disturbed. He found nothing. Then he went into the front yard and looked around under the lilac bushes. Here he found a place which looked suspicious. Digging into the ground he found the \$1,700 which had been placed in two baking-powder cans.

Here a great curtain of mystery was drawn over the beautiful lives of Minneva Neher and her fellow missionaries, Alva and Mary Harsh. After receiving permission from a Japanese official the three had gone outside the compound gate in response to a call for help and have never returned. What more fitting words than those in

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one of Minneva's favorite hymns could be found to sum up the story of her life:

Oh, Jesus, Lord and Savior, I give myself to Thee,
For Thou, in Thine atonement, didst give Thyself for me.
I own no other Master, my heart shall be Thy throne,
My life I give, henceforth to live, oh Christ, for Thee alone.

Living for Jesus, a life that is true,
Striving to please Him in all that I do,
Yielding allegiance, glad-hearted and free,
This is the pathway of blessing for me.

At Minneva's suggestion, this hymn was sung as a duet at her last mission conference in April 1937 at Ping Ting. She asked her fellow worker, Grace Clapper, to sing it with her. Grace felt that she had never heard Minneva sing with such deep feeling as she did that day.

MARY HYKES HARSH

This has been a great day for us. We remember that three years ago the entire house in Maryland was in a bustle. This is our wedding anniversary. I thank you so much for Mary Lou. It was awfully nice of you to let me have her. We are just mighty happy to be together here in China.

This is what Alva Harsh wrote on June 6, 1937, to Mary Hykes Harsh's parents three years after he had won Mary's hand and heart. It is necessary only to read through both Alva's and Mary's letters to see how deeply they loved each other and how thankful they were that their lives had been joined together. Both of them looked into the future with high hopes for a long and happy life in their Christian service. It almost seems as

if they felt that life had dealt a bit unfairly with them that they had not met sooner.

In a neat white farmhouse near Hagerstown, Maryland, Mary Hykes was born on August 25, 1903. She was the second daughter of Brother and Sister Charles S. Hykes. She had four sisters and one brother.

Mary was a little girl of twelve when she united with the church. She was baptized and became an active member of the Broadfording church. She was always ready to serve it joyfully.

She was a child who found much pleasure in going to school, where she was with others. She liked school and all its interesting activities. She wanted to attend high school but to do so it was necessary to commute back and forth. Since she was unable to do this, for three years in succession she attended the eighth grade in her rural school. Although she was not taking high school courses, nevertheless those extra years in the rural graded school were for her practically the equivalent of high school work. She had made the very most of her circumstances and in this she early showed her ability to make opportunities for herself.

In the summer of 1922 when she was about seventeen years of age she was as busy as a bee getting ready to go to Elizabethtown Academy at Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania. She was overjoyed that her parents had consented to have her go to school. It was not easy for her to say farewell to her family when the time came to start to the academy. But in this Mary was a pioneer, for she found

herself breaking with the established idea that advanced education was not essential. She dared to do the unusual thing of venturing for an education. It seems that from this time on Mary's motto was *Venturing for Knowledge, for Friendship and for God.*

At the academy Mary determined to complete the three-year course in two years and teach to earn her college education. As an aspiring young girl she applied for a teaching position. The school in question was a problem school and the director, scrutinizing Mary, laughed and exclaimed, "Do you think you can teach this school?" Mary replied, "I'm not afraid of anything." Her courage won her the position. She taught four years and then returned to Elizabethtown College. In 1928 the evasive and often almost impossible goal seemed in sight, for she was a senior and graduation, at which she was to give the salutatory address, was set for June. What a disappointing blow was dealt when she was informed that since she had really spent only two years in academy work she was not a full high school graduate and of course could not receive a college degree. Again she dared to remove the mountain by taking examinations at the department of education in Harrisburg and passing in time to graduate with her class. Mary said that it certainly was God's helping hand that carried her through.

After receiving her Bachelor of Arts degree she taught a year in the English department in the Ephrata high school. Mary's schoolteaching meant more to her than dealing out curriculum essentials. There was something

about her that made her pupils realize they could trust her and depend on her. They remember her more as a friend than as a teacher. This probably accounts for the letters she received from her pupils. Although the teaching position was an enviable one, she decided that Bethany Biblical Seminary was a wiser choice than continuing in the teaching profession at that time. Accordingly she spent the winters of 1929 and 1930 in Chicago, where she received her master's degree in religious education. During these years in school and at work in her home church Mary held responsible positions that undoubtedly made her work in China easier and more successful. While in college, she was a valuable asset on the debating team and also the winner of the oratorical contest. As a member of the Volunteers she was elected secretary of the Eastern United States Volunteer Union. In Chicago she taught in a Chinese Sunday school and in the parental school, assisted in the Cook County Hospital work and the Oak Forest County Home services. The Blind Institute and the Gospel Loop Mission also remember her. In her home church at Broadfording she served as Sunday-school teacher, president of the local B. Y. P. D. and also district B. Y. P. D. president. Two summers she taught in Camp Peniel.

It was on June 6, 1934, that Mary Hykes and Alva Harsh were married. The old Broadfording church made a beautiful setting for a church wedding. The place was made more lovely still with daisies and ferns. They promised to love and cherish each other for life.

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Very soon they moved to Petersburg, West Virginia, where they served three churches of that community. They put their lives into their service, and when the General Mission Board called upon them to go to China it was not easy for the church to give them up. Nevertheless, in spite of feeling the loss, the church felt happy to say that it was now represented in Africa, India and China by those who have been its pastors. Their two years of service left an influence of benediction on the hearts and lives of the members and neighbors whom they had loved and faithfully served.

From the time Mary was a small girl she had borne in her heart the dream of being a missionary. And through the years she had worked diligently in preparing herself to be a good missionary. And so it was no great surprise that her dream should be fulfilled and the prayers of her husband and herself should be answered.

In the fall of 1935, in facing a great need for recruits for the China mission field, the General Mission Board asked Alva and Mary if they would consider going to the China field. Their answer was not long in coming; they assured the board that they would be most happy to go.

They were appointed by the board, presented to the Standing Committee and confirmed, and introduced to the Annual Conference at Hershey, Pennsylvania, in June 1936. The next few months were busy ones as they made preparation for sailing. On September 12, 1936, they sailed with two other new missionaries from the port of Seattle on the S. S. President Grant.

The long train ride from the far East to the far West was filled with thrilling experiences. The Harshes saw things of fascinating interest all along the way. Just for fun Mary broke forth into rhyme to describe their course across the United States.

On September 4, near fall of night,
The sky was clear and bright;
A party of two bade fond adieu
To Maryland and West Virginia too.
The Pullman was a welcome sight
To Alva and his Mary wife.
The night wore fast into the day
Which brought us to Chicago gray.
Many friends were ours to meet
The while we spent to drink and eat.
The Union Pacific we boarded next
Leading us farther and farther west.
The service rendered to a T
Reminded one of Ole Virginny.
In N. A. coach of tourist class
Passengers chat as scenes we pass:
The politician with gift of gab,
English chap and college grad,
Missionary, nurse and preacher too
Mingled together, enjoying the new
As East met West. The surprises grew,
Enhancing tales with colorful hues.
The mountains widened into plains
Where farm products needed rain.
From low to high we swifter flew
When Wednesday morning gave sight of dew
Sparkling o'er plains six thousand feet high
Surrounded by desert high and dry;
Sages of green, purple and yellow hues
Creating a galaxy of sky blues.
See the shepherd, bravest of men,

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Who herds his flock along the glen.
When nightfall comes he takes his sheep
Where he and they may vigils keep.
Where East met West, one scarcely knew,
For manners, customs and people too
Blended their differences in the quest
Till East and Easterner were West.
Hour by hour sped swiftly by,
Each new scene caught with eagle eye.
The Challenger out from Chicago goes,
But from Green River, 'twas the Portland Rose.
Our three days and nights of travel by rail
Brought us "The Ten" by Columbia trail.
The exquisite Rockies of dizzy height
Furnished marvels for lovers' delight.
The snow-capped St. Helens to the East
Gave marked evidence of the West in bold relief.
The Oregon fruits in abundance we see
And we declare it a grand country.
One hour in Portland's fairy-like place
Gives freedom to body, soul and face.
Then on to Seattle we journey fast
And see the sparkling blue harbor at last.
Very soon, on the great ship we'll be
And sail toward China across the sea.

ALVA C. HARSH

The short story of Alva Carlton Harsh which was published in the Gospel Messenger, the church paper of the Church of the Brethren, at the time when he went to China was told so well by his uncle, Emra Fike, that it is reprinted in this book. This account of his life from his childhood to the day he sailed as a missionary could not be better presented if it were rewritten.

It is a real joy to speak of young men who are making good. This is true of Bro. Alva Harsh. He was born September 29, 1910, in the home of Jesse F. and Effie Fike Harsh. The Harsh home is known as one of our finest homes. Brother and Sister Harsh, along with the grandfather and grandmother, Elder John S. Fike and wife, have always kept a decidedly spiritual atmosphere pervading the home. The following children blessed this family: Alva (the oldest child), Roy, Flora Ellen, Norman, Nellie and Arvin.

This story would be incomplete without considering his background. During the past two generations his relatives have been consecrated members of the Church of the Brethren. On the mother's side the Fikes have been members of the Church of the Brethren for at least six generations. In the great-great-grandfather's family there have been at least sixty ministers of the Dunkard Church. The great-grandfather, S. A. Fike, was elder of the Eglon congregation for forty years. He was an outstanding pioneer missionary and was instrumental in laying the foundation for more of our churches among the West Virginia hills than any man who ever labored in the western part of the First and Second districts of West Virginia, sometimes leaving his home for as much as six weeks at a time. Many of the trips he made across the country on faithful old Bill, his horse. Alva's own father is the foreman of the board of deacons of the Eglon congregation.

Brother Alva was baptized into the Church of the Brethren in June 1922. During his early childhood days he was always interested in things pertaining to the church and its program, and so evident was his desire to serve that at the age of seventeen he was placed in the ministry by the Eglon congregation, West Virginia. Since that day when the elders laid their hands of blessing upon him the urgent appeal of the ministry has stayed close by him. In the midst of heavy school schedules he took time to serve whenever possible, and since college days are over three summers have been given fully to very successful evangelistic work.

A little sketch of the many activities of this young man in the last few years will give an insight into his very busy life and give some idea of the confidence and trust others had in him as well. He became president of the B.Y.P.D. of the First District of West Virginia

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in October of 1929, and again was selected for the same office during each of the three following years. Soon after entering Bethany Seminary in September 1930, he was made president of the young people's class of the First church of Chicago, and by January he was serving as vice-president of the young men's association at Bethany. The following November, being in Elizabethtown College, he served on the intercollegiate debating team and in March of the following year he was made business manager for the college annual. In April he was chosen to serve as vice-president of the Y.M.C.A. at Elizabethtown and in the next month he became president of the local Student Volunteer group at Elizabethtown. In June he began serving as president of the United Student Volunteers, Church of the Brethren. Again in the autumn of 1932 he entered college at Elizabethtown. This year he was made president of the college debating association, also president of the college Sunday-school class and business manager of the lyceum course. The following April he was elected president of the Y.M.C.A. and in May he became a member of the Pennsylvania State Y.M.C.A. Student Council. He spent one year in Bethany Biblical Seminary and was graduated from Elizabethtown College with the Bachelor of Arts degree in 1934.

The past two years have been spent in a very acceptable manner in doing pastoral work jointly in the Petersburg, North Fork and Greenland congregations of West Virginia.

Brother Alva's disposition especially fits him for work among the young people. In the home congregation at Eglon he was very helpful. In this work he was also active in organizing the young people of the First and Second districts of West Virginia and of Western Maryland for a summer camp which meets each year at the Memorial Grove near Eglon, West Virginia. Alva has been a real force in the work of the church and, with his consecration to the cause of missions, it is little wonder that the General Mission Board has selected him to represent the work in China. Brother Alva has made his life's work much more effective by the selection of Sister Mary Hykes as partner for life.

Our First District, as well as his home church, is loath to give him up, but rejoice in the fact that he will continue to serve his Master

on the foreign field. The Eglon church rejoices today that it can have its congregation represented in Africa, in India, and in China. There is no doubt that this is in answer to the prayers of our forefathers, who desired to send of their own sons and daughters to share the Christ with people on the other side of the globe. May this call stir us to greater activity.

As pastor bidding farewell to his people, Alva wrote the members of the Petersburg churches the following note:

The time has come when we must say farewell. I trust it shall in no sense mean good-by to any of us. Farewell only means "may you fare well while we are apart" and that should bring a cheerful thought to each of us. Especially is this true for the Christian who gives himself wholly to God. Then there shall be a meeting of us all in God's own good kingdom. We feel more definitely than ever before that God wants us in China as His and your ambassadors of Christian love and salvation.

In conclusion, allow me to express again our appreciation to you for the opportunity of working with you and sharing life with you during the past two years. Where we have failed, we ask your forgiveness. Where we have succeeded, we thank you for your help. I trust the leaders of the various organizations within the church will feel your responsibility of carrying on the work and not being dependent on the new pastor too much.

It is but another call from God
To do some deed undone and duty we forgot;
To think some wider thought of man and good,
To see and love with kindlier eyes and warmer heart,
Until, acquainted more with him and keener-eyed
To sense the need of man we serve,
We serve with larger sacrifice and readier hand our kind.

—Unidentified

ALVA AND MARY HARSH

From this point on the biographies of Alva and Mary are combined. In fact, one cannot think or write of one without the other. They always signed their letters *Al and Mary Lou*. And from now on the setting is in China.

The party sailed on September 12, 1936, and for these four new missionaries the voyage across the Pacific was a month of delightfully happy experiences, even though they passed through several typhoons. They saw much and appreciated everything. Their letters to parents and friends were filled with interesting descriptions and comments. They felt that all along the way God was right by their side.

And then they reached their destination and found themselves "babes" not speaking a word. They were in truth in a strange land. Their address was the College of Chinese Studies, Peiping, China, and they settled down to the strenuous task of learning the language. Every missionary knows the grueling process of acquiring a new tongue and the Harshes were no exception to this universal rule. With all the drilling and all the long hours, there were moments which could be snatched for recreation, sightseeing and becoming acquainted with the land and its people. In one of their early letters to their parents they described their home, the school and the city.

Where we stay a large wall is built around space the size of two city blocks approximately, and within is a large lawn with many kinds of trees and flowers, lawn seats, a fish pond, many tennis courts and three large stone buildings three stories high, each the

size of the Winter Street school in Hagerstown. Each building has a dining hall and sleeping rooms for students. We have two nice rooms. I think I described them in a previous letter. We have met people here from Australia, India, Scotland, Denmark, Sweden, England, Ireland and U.S.A. That in itself is a real education. There are about seventy or eighty students enrolled, most of whom are missionaries, doctors, nurses, teachers and preachers by profession. Last week each day but Saturday, we went to class from 8:30 in the morning to 12 noon and two to four P.M. We learn now by direct method. The teachers have objects as money, pencil, paper and book and tell us, "This is a book, etc.," in Chinese. We've been given about fifty words and learned how to count up to one thousand. When we go down the street, we can ask for what we want and pay our bills. The ten cent, twenty cent and dollar units all are paper. The only coins are coppers larger than that cent of father's up in the spare room and twenty make a nickel.

Some time later, Alva declared in all seriousness that the time was passing so rapidly that they were afraid their furloughs would be due before they were aware of it! He continued his comments:

Now we have studied the language three weeks and we can go to the stores and business places and talk enough to make ourselves understood quite well. It really is heaps of fun to study this language and learn to talk all over again.

The grandeur of fall weather thrilled both of them. Mary's pencil could not be stayed as she wrote:

Autumn is upon us. Whilst the trees here are not the flaming hues of the sugar maples, we do have interesting reminders of autumn. For instance, on our court garden we have a tree called "Red Fruit." The best description I can give of it is that it is a small red crab apple. The top limbs are bending low with these red apples while the leaves are turning the pretty pale yellows, oranges and reds. Also the buildings are covered with a climbing vine similar to our ivy and those leaves are changing, giving the entire court an autumnal glow.

About a month later, Alva gave vent to his love for the beauty of nature about them:

Thus far our climate has been very fine. Cold and some frosts but still we have snapdragons and chrysanthemums blooming. But this morning when we awoke, everything was so quiet and we looked out to greet the dawning and we saw Mother Nature had dressed everything in a spotless white gown. The willow tree outside our window still has green leaves, and also the roses. They were an interesting spectacle all covered with snow.

And when they felt they could not express themselves sufficiently in their own words they used the poem which told it as they wished they might say it.

UNDAUNTED

No covering of leaflet,
Of snow or mould
Is kindly protecting
From frost and from cold;
The grapevine above it,
A skeleton brown,
Hangs naked, with ragged bark touching the ground;
The grass all around it is bungled and sear,
The wind sharp and pungent but still with good cheer,
With courage and beauty it lifts its fair head
And blossoms all undaunted among the grim dead.
Some people may call you a shy little freak,
For living and growing through winter winds bleak.
But, why are you blooming? Did God touch you there
And whisper a message that He'd have you bear?
Did He know a floweret could courage impart
When strong winds were blowing and chilling the heart?
Bloom on, little violet, so brave and so blue,
The winter is needing sweet blossoms like you.

—Mary S. Wine

When spring began to come they longed that friends in America might really see China as they saw it.

We wish you could see the lawn now. Before us are four beds of lovely pansy faces nodding their heads. On both sides are rows of roses; some are in buds and some are full blown pink tea roses. The buildings are covered with ivy.

Once after looking at a beautiful sunset, Mary recalled the story of a little girl who looked at the great vast dome of heaven lined with many colors and then turning to her mother said, "Mother, if the wrong side of heaven's carpet is so beautiful, what must the right side be like?" Mary joined the little girl in asking the same question.

Although as yet the Harshes had not gone inland far enough to see the Church of the Brethren mission stations and the Chinese church members, they were active in church work while busy with their study in Peiping. They attended church service regularly and considered it a great privilege to hear outstanding ministers and missionaries from many groups.

Mary taught a class of high school girls in Sunday school and she sang in the church choir. Now and again she spoke to groups of Chinese girls through an interpreter at the Y. W. C. A. and she found it a joyous ministry to sing in broadcasts over the radio to the English-speaking people in China.

Alva served as secretary-treasurer of the young people's department of the union Sunday school. He spoke to groups of Chinese young men and women whenever the opportunity presented itself and one evening he preached

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the sermon in the church. The twelve-minute message which he gave on Sunday evening, the last day of January, was about *Living With Jesus Today*. He selected as his text Matthew 6:25-34, Genesis 41:51, and Philippians 3:13.

Sometimes we see too much to see in perfection. We may illustrate with a picture of art. To get too close is to see the detail rather than the whole and miss its real beauty. The thousand touches on the canvas are for *one* effect, but standing back one can see the entire picture while many of the strokes are hidden or greatly subdued.

So it is with the experience of life. Life is filled with joys and sorrows. Little souls let a special sorrow wreck their lives. Life is meant for us to look at as a whole—in a glorious panorama, and when we do we are happy people. A broken-hearted lover will marry later and be happy; a fond parent goes on as though the child had not died. It is meant by God to be so. A chance word or thought, like the changing winds on the desert, will uncover the memory, but the breeze soon comes again to cover it up. If God had not made life so, our sorrows would kill us.

A great treat was in store for the new missionaries. Their first Christmas (and for Alva and Mary it was their only Christmas) in China was spent visiting the mission stations at Tai Yuan, Ping Ting and Show Yang. They were immensely pleased with all they saw and were delighted to find such progress in the work. They made many new friends among the Chinese and the missionaries. It was when they were at Ping Ting that they were asked to contribute to a program and they sang the song, *Are Ye Able?* in such an impressive way that most of those who heard it will never forget it. For some of the missionaries it was the first time they had ever heard the

beautiful hymn. Their ten days or two weeks passed away all too rapidly and yet they were glad to return to Peiping to begin their second term of language study. They had a "hunch" that the more language they got the more difficult it would become—and their hunch was correct. They rejoiced when they could understand enough Chinese to get the meaning of a Chinese sermon and to go out among the people and talk to almost anyone and understand him and be understood by him.

Only those who have passed through the ordeal of taking examination on reading fifteen hundred Chinese characters and writing five hundred characters will appreciate just how much it meant to Alva and Mary when they were informed that they had passed. They rejoiced greatly.

Being in the great city of Peiping, the Harshes enjoyed meeting important people and seeing many works of art. China's beautiful architecture attracted them. They would never forget the great altar of heaven and the gorgeous blue-tiled roof of the Temple of Heaven, the ancient porcelain screen, the empress's garden, the bridge and even the man-made mountains.

One afternoon they viewed an art exhibit where paintings made by students from one of the Peiping universities were shown. The pictures portrayed Christ and his followers as Chinese. The Harshes were impressed to see how the Chinese Christians felt that Christ was one of them.

It was a real event when they went out to tea at the

home of the Chinese ambassador to Brazil. The daughter of the ambassador was in Mary's Sunday-school class and thus it came about that the Harshes were invited to the tea.

The great universities of the city stood out in sharp contrast to the ignorance and the poverty of the masses. They gave promise of great hope for the future.

While Alva and Mary were busy in language study, they heard rumors of unrest, movements of communists, and destruction of villages. When General Chiang Kai-shek was captured and hidden away, rumors ran riot and there was much confusion. As new missionaries the Harshes found it hard to understand.

Precious friendships were made among their fellow language students. Some of these friends were mentioned again and again in their letters. There was one couple of the name of Zimmer with whom the Harshes found joyous fellowship. Mary and Sylvia became fast friends; both found pleasure in the same kind of things; both liked poetry.

The children of the missionaries were a source of inspiration and delight to the Harshes. Since the children's school was located at Tung Chow, only fifteen miles from Peiping, they had the opportunity of visiting back and forth at times. They felt proud of these children and said so openly. It was a treat to the children when they were granted permission to spend a Sunday or a week end in the city with Alva and Mary.

Again in April, Alva and Mary went out to Shansi to

visit the Church of the Brethren missionaries. After giving themselves to diligent study since Christmas, it did them much good to lay aside their books for a week and take the train for a sixteen-hour ride to Ping Ting. They rode third class, which cost just one fourth of first-class fare. They made the wooden seats comfortable with their blankets. They went to spend the days with Dr. Daryl and Martha Parker and their sons, Donald and Robert.

It gave them much to think about that they actually passed through a branch portion of the great stone wall of China at one place, both going and coming, since the wall forms part of the eastern boundary of the mission's territory.

They loved the Shansi hills. The green trees, grass and gardens, the apricot, pear and peach blossoms gave them a special thrill. It was worth a great deal to them to see the people industriously cultivating every little knoll and terrace.

In one of their meditative moods they discussed the fact that if anyone had told them three years ago that they would come to the other side of the world, they would not have believed him and then they looked forward into the future and decided that they would be willing to have things happen in the coming three years that they did not know at present. They felt that unless they had that attitude toward the future, there was little use to ask God to direct their lives. They agreed between themselves that God would have little chance to direct them unless they

were willing to have the seemingly impossible happen.

Frequently they used stationery with Bible texts printed at the top. On one sheet were the words of Hebrews 13:5: "He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." This message called forth the following remarks from Alva:

I do love the above statement. It is so repeatedly true every day of our lives. The Lord is good to us every step of the way. Really we cannot be thankful enough. Every day we count our blessings and find them more than we can enumerate. It is such a privilege, yet such a tremendous responsibility to be here spending such precious money doing such precious work.

In one of her letters to her mother, Mary said, "Mother, we love the Chinese people. They are certainly courteous and generous to take us as uninvited guests and treat us so nicely." And Alva could not help but soliloquize:

China is so much like any other country in some respects. Side by side are poverty and wealth. Some children come from the wealthiest homes and they are bright and very clean and well dressed while on the outside of the wall are poor little streeturchins who look as if they never saw water, or had a mother. I am convinced that it must have been so in Jesus' day.

And together they summed up their thoughts: "God has made China so beautiful and he has given to these people things they can share with us to make our lives richer and we in turn have much to share with them."

A good store of wit belonged to both Alva and Mary. Very few folks who have had the experience of being bothered with fleas can consider them a joke, but Alva could speak, with a smile on his face, of the forty big

bites which formed welts as big as a dime. He decided that his next plan to escape the fleas would be to crawl inside a glass jar and put the lid on.

During a sermon in Chinese, they could scarcely keep their faces straight, for the preacher talked for one hour and forty minutes at about "forty miles per minute" and the Harshes could not understand a word he said. It also reminded them of the good old days when it was said that drowsy parishioners were kept awake during a long discourse by the use of a fly brush!

When Alva mowed a patch of grass with an old American scythe, he must have used Huckleberry Finn's tactics. He says:

I found a foreign scythe which someone brought here years ago. So I took it and started mowing. Presently a group of Chinese men came to watch me. They thought this a very peculiar way to cut grass. They saw that it cut grass rapidly and they wanted to try it and I let them. I'm sure I had more fun watching them than they did watching me.

On June 15, after Alva and Mary had spent almost nine months in school, they moved into our mission territory and were located at Show Yang, which is situated along the railway about thirty miles westward from Ping Ting. It had been decided that the Harshes should live at Show Yang with Minneva Neher since she was alone at the station just at that time.

Their house was to be the two-story brick building not far from the other mission house. Because no one had lived in it for a few years they repaired a couple of rooms

downstairs for their use. While the repairing was going on, they lived in the same house with Minneva. It all seemed very wonderful to them to be "at home" in China. They were now at the place where they were to carry on their work. Everything was pleasing to them for they were *in love* with their work.

Their garden, which Minneva had started for them, delighted them. It seemed almost too good to be true that they should have tomatoes, lettuce, sweet corn, red beets, celery and even watermelons out of their own garden plot.

Both Alva and Mary Harsh were keen in their appreciation of the Chinese people. They knew that it was not only necessary to know the Chinese language but to be acquainted with the people. It was a pleasure for them to visit in the Chinese homes where they tried to talk and use all the Chinese language they could. During their first week at Show Yang they visited seven homes.

In the same manner they entered heartily into the trip to the high mountains of Wu Tai. For them this meant a tour and a vacation which would help them to know China and its people better. Their fellow missionary, Minneva Neher, was also one of the party, as has already been mentioned. It seems fitting to quote the whole of Mary's letter which covers the two weeks in the mountains.

Show Yang, July 18, 1937. Dear Loved Ones at Home: Well, two weeks have passed since we last had a chat, and in that interim we had what might be called by some a vacation. At least, we were

not studying Chinese. Instead, we were moving about from place to place among the mountains on mules. Rather, Alva was riding a mule and Mary Lou a little donkey. All together, we traveled about one hundred forty miles on the backs of these animals. We were with some of the older missionaries, who went with us to give us this introduction to Chinese life.

We took small folding cots and covers along. Wherever we could find some wayside inn or temple with room enough to put these cots down, we would sleep there and when we couldn't find room to put them down we slept on the Chinese k'ang, which is the type of bed the Chinese use. It consists merely of a hard baked-mud platform built up solidly from the floor for about two and a half feet. On this one just stretches out and finds it as hard as the ground. Of course, it is softened by the number of covers one has to put under him, but usually the Chinese use very few or none. The k'ang is built so that a fire can be built under it to keep it warm and covers will not then be necessary.

One night, Alva slept on a k'ang between two Chinese men. Mary Lou slept with four other women on a k'ang just a little larger than a double bed. This was in an old Lama temple on top of a mountain and it was the only place within miles that we could find to spend the night. Temples here have these guest rooms and in certain sections they are the only places where travelers may stay. It seems strange to us, since in America we would not keep people like that in our churches. But when we are out and there is no place to stay, we naturally welcome some place to lay our heads at night. All the Chinese homes in that section are scarcely large enough for their own families. On that particular night, there were about fifty Chinese who also stayed in this temple, and they had sleeping accommodations for only about fifteen. We almost felt as though there was no room in the inn . . . and we were mighty thankful just to get this place to stretch out after a day of travel. The head priest treated us just as nicely as he could although he had little to offer. The next morning when we awoke, we found the grass covered with frost and actually found some ice on the leaves up on that high mountain. But nothing seemed to be hurt.

The mountain was covered with wild flowers, and we saw hemp,

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flax, peas, buckwheat, alfalfa, wheat, oats, corn, potatoes and almost everything else we had ever seen grow in America. In one village where we spent the night in an inn, we certainly did get a new understanding of some of the conditions Jesus faced. It was a typical roadside inn. We had a couple of small rooms and right across from us was the mule stable and in the courtyards were pigs and chickens running about which we had to watch carefully or they would slip into our room. When the news got about that foreigners were in the village, the people just came right into the court and out of curiosity peeped into everything their eyes could behold. We learned that they had seen but few white people before and that they know nothing about Christianity. So we preached to them and told Bible stories and taught them a couple of songs. The people just kept coming into the court and crowded right up to the front and the ones in the back kept pushing until we were jammed right up in the corner of the court, and if we had only had a boat we might gladly have pushed out to sea and taught them. We stopped but they would not leave until we told them more. Finally, about 10:30 at night, we told them we must go to bed and after we had almost forced our way to our rooms and closed the doors, they finally began to drift away. Well, we had a most interesting and unusual trip in many ways and we come back ready to go at the language with a new vim and vigor.

You might be interested to know that every Chinese temple we visited had a couple of live roosters about the court. We saw much of Chinese life this trip and we like China better than ever. We see more that needs to be done in order that the country might be more Christian. There is so much in America that we just take for granted. Many things have come about because of Christian influence, which has affected the general development of the country, and yet we never stopped to think it is out of the ordinary. But when we come to see another nation that has not had the blessing of Christian influence we soon see what a difference it makes.

Best wishes to you all, and don't be alarmed about us here for all will be well in His care.

It was not long after they returned from their restful

trip that they began to realize that war conditions were becoming increasingly serious, especially in and about Peiping. The Harshes assured themselves that they were four hundred fifty miles away from that big city and that their small town of Show Yang would not be disturbed very much. They thought that the most that might happen to the place would be to have railroad service cut off, and that would only cause isolation. In spite of all the reports that came to them of fighting and destruction and uncertainty they felt that they could be sure of one thing. And that one thing was that "God cares for us all," according to the way Mary closed her letter of August 15.

The joy of being in the work they had come to do in China gave them comfort. They visited in homes, they took trips into villages along with Pastor Chao and Minneva Neher, and they took part in the preaching and prayer services. In one of the neighboring churches where the work was carried on entirely by the Chinese Christians, they attended their first communion service in the Chinese church. Thirty were present and they were the three who were not Chinese. Mary and Alva scarcely knew how to express the emotions they experienced as they entered into that beautiful love feast.

As the weeks passed by, fighting became worse in many places. It also came nearer to Shansi. The Chinese people asked them if they were not afraid to remain in China, and they assured them that they were not alarmed.

Their lovely letters written to their parents near the

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end of August were full of love and trust but gave evidence of deepening concern and a forecast of the future.

Several Chinese have asked us if we aren't afraid to be here while war is going on in the country. We tell them no, and ask them what we should be afraid of. We tell them that God can take care of us and that if he chooses to allow anyone to take our lives here then we can go to His country where people won't fight. And we really mean every word of it. We have not had the least bit of fear. We trust there is nothing to fear. We really don't believe there is anything serious going to happen right in this territory; but even if it does, we would much rather give our lives in the service of the Kingdom than to give them as so many of the young men of both China and Japan are doing every day now in warfare. We honestly don't know just how serious it is where the war is going on now. We have had no paper for more than a month. We hear a little every day from the Chinese. It is what they read in their paper and what they hear but we just seem to be cut off from the world. But it does give us a good chance to witness for Christ, and the people here have been keeping their heads in a remarkable way. They do not hate the Japanese, but seem to understand that it is just part of a machine that has brought this on.

Then came scouting planes. Later bombs were dropped near by and several mornings at daybreak the missionaries left the city and went to the home of Chinese Christians some miles away to spend the day, returning home each evening. And next they write about the deep cave which the Chinese Christian people had prepared, large enough for about eighty people during a raid. Next armed soldiers entered the Show Yang city gates and later five hundred soldiers came.

On October 12 a bombing plane passed over the mission, dropping its bombs very close at hand. Alva and Mary were on their front porch and saw this happen.

At the order of the American consul, the missionaries put up American flags. There were lulls and again renewed anxiety.

In the midst of it all Alva and Mary rejoiced in their blessings. For their devotions one morning they used the Bible concordance and searched out every reference on grace in order that they might see anew the boundless, fathomless grace God extends to all.

Along the first week in October they began a diary in order to record some of the incidents which were happening all about them. Day by day they added to it, even until December 2. The last sheet still remained in their typewriter after they were gone. How hopeful is their last message written on their last day! Just twelve lines, typed at 1:00 P. M. and found several days later by fellow missionaries. These lines are quoted in full:

December 2—1:00 P.M.

Yesterday we went with the Frenchman and his family to the railroad station and they left for Yang Chuan, their home. This morning we started studying again and got about half time in. The rest of the time was spent discussing various situations and problems with folks who came in. This afternoon I want to go to the Catholic mission, our hospital, our church court and to see the Japanese official and give him a letter which he will carry to Tientsin for us and give to our treasurer there. As a result we hope you folks in America will get part of the contents. A few planes passed over again today but instead of running from them the people now go out to watch them cross over. People seem less and less afraid each day and for the last week we have had practically no disturbance by the army. Last night we had a wonderful worship service led by Miss Neher. Our blessings are many.

And how comforting to read their last letter to their

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dear home folks, also written on their final day on earth. Reverently and with a deep sense of awe these lines must be read.

Show Yang, China, December 2, 1937. Our dear Home Folks: Greetings in the name of our blessed Master, to you and all our dear friends near you who may inquire about us.

This somewhat sombre December day we do wish down deep in our hearts for a chat to tell you about what has happened to us and the country since we really had normal mail communications, but that seems out of the question.

Conditions have become more and more serious and we have had to meet many problems. The Lord has certainly shown us His hand by helping us. Each time we were up against a problem when we did not know what to do for the best interest of all concerned, we did not do anything until we had some definite leading from the Lord.

Yesterday when Alva went to the railroad station I went along. This was the first I was outside the court for over four weeks. The town, in these weeks, took on a very different aspect. What was once a busy little market town is now almost a complete desolation with soldiers going and coming any hour of the day, stray horses and mules and donkeys going through field and street, a few natives slowly returning but wearing forlorn expressions as they view the remains of their town, a few lonely-looking dogs and a few cheerful chattering birds. You perhaps wonder if I couldn't picture a more hopeless picture. Well, the half has not yet been seen nor could we tell it. But, tomorrow, the Japanese official is going to Tientsin and offered to take our mail along and we really believe in two or three more weeks we can get your mail. Our food supply is quite abundant and since the Frenchman of whom we previously told you plans to live at Yang Chuan, he gave us the opportunity to buy his large supply of coal; so in view of the coming winter we are abundantly blessed. Since this conflict has come into our town, in these five weeks we entertained no less than two hundred people in our home, and from the highest to the lowest, our Christ said: "Inasmuch as ye did it unto these least, ye did it unto ME."

Each day Alva makes a tour to our church compound and the hospital to see if all is intact and follows the oxcart to haul coal, etc., most of the rest of the time, besides meeting officials and acting as go-between. I visit the women folks on the compound to try to keep them sweet in such close quarters. Ha! Teach a class of kindergarten Chinese children, keep our home in order, make American flags for the buildings and in between this we both try to study a little of the language.

We trust this will be the most meaningful Christmas you ever spent. Truly may His peace be in your hearts as never before.

Alva thinks if he follows the oxcart very long, he will be quite cautious when he returns home to drive an auto. The difference in speed sort of gives one time to think as well as reflect. The only thing we don't have that we miss in food here is eggs. So we make waffles, cookies, hot gems, pumpkin pie, ice cream and everything eggless. Do you want some eggless recipes?

Mother, we think of all your birthdays as they pass us and talk of you and wish you all many more happy ones to come.

How are all? We hope all have kept well; our health has been as good as usual and we are so grateful. Mary and Alva.

This letter written to their parents on the last day of their lives is filled with trust and confidence. In it they have spoken of doing nothing until they had definite leading from the Lord. Examples of this are clearly shown in experiences they had which friends have reported later. One day after the Japanese were in the city, Pastor Chao, Dr. Hsing and Alva Harsh went to the west suburb to look after some Christians about whom they had not heard since the occupation. Since Alva belonged to a neutral country he felt that it would be safe for him to accompany the two Christian Chinese helpers. But on the street they saw several bands of Chinese prisoners tied together with rope being taken out of the city where they were

to be killed. The three Christian men were horrified and frightened and to make matters worse they were called in off the street and questioned by Japanese officers whose manner was most terrifying. During this incident, while at home alone, Mary had a strong urge to pray. She went into her bedroom and knelt in prayer and stayed there until the second lead came, which was a happy feeling of relief. She had the assurance that all was well and that she could now go out to the big compound gate and meet her husband. She did so and found the three men just returning home. In this and many other ways the three missionaries proved the power of prayer.

EXCERPTS FROM THE HARSHES' DIARY

November 22

The streets are still full of soldiers. We were warned tonight not to be scared at the sound of cannon fire for the soldiers were just using the cannon to shoot down trees to get fuel. It was only ten above zero last night and the weather is very hard on the soldiers; fuel is hard to get. This evening twenty-two more merchants came back to the city but they cannot live in their homes; so we had to provide a place for them to sleep tonight. We hope that in the next couple of days they can fix up their homes enough so that they can live in them. Our Japanese officer friend had a large notice pasted on our door today forbidding ordinary soldiers from entering; so we have had no trouble with them today.

November 24

Life is not so full of the unusual these days. About the most exciting thing that has happened was the finding of two hand bombs on a man who said his aim was to come here to our court and kill the president of this reorganization committee. But hand bombs are small compared to cannon and airplane bombs. Yesterday at one time I counted one hundred men going through our lawn to go to the headquarters of the reorganization committee to be approved and to get a little money to buy salt. Today it is four weeks since we were bombed and everybody scattered. We wanted to celebrate by starting back to study the language but there were just too many other pressing things that had to be done; so we had no opportunity. But we certainly have had a good opportunity to try to use all the language we know during the past four weeks in trying to do what we could to help. This afternoon two soldiers came with a message from one of the Japanese officials who had formerly been in our home and is now stationed about seventy-five miles from here. They had a donkey with them but since they were going back on the train they said they didn't want it and left it here in the court. We are going to feed it until such time as we can sell it and then use the money to help the poor homeless people. Now the mission owns a donkey. This is something new in history.

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November 25—Thanksgiving Day

A beautiful day and so many things to be thankful for. Dr. Hsing, Pastor Chang and several others of our Christians came back from the villages to which they had fled and we had news from others that they are still safe. Miss Neher was our dinner guest and we had a very pleasant evening together. We thought much of former Thanksgivings in America and also of our American friends. I write this at 10:15 P.M. and you are probably just preparing to go to church for your Thanksgiving service. May God bless you. Most of our day has been spent in trying to help people find a place to live and in trying to cheer up those who are depressed over loss of property and friends. Surely there are many hearts that are deeply pained as they try to face what lies ahead as they prepare a place to live.

November 28—Sunday Afternoon

Our motto these days is "Slow but sure." Our coal supply was getting low, and a church member from a near-by village came in with his ox cart; so we took the ox cart and the donkey the Japanese soldiers had given us and brought coal from the Frenchman's home about a mile away. First we had to get a permit from the Japanese officer and then we could haul only about eight hundred fifty pounds on the cart and the donkey would carry a bag with about one hundred fifty pounds. We figured we got about three tons in six trips. Each time I had to go along to protect the men who were hauling the coal.

Even missionaries can haul coal with ox carts and donkeys in 1937. While hauling coal we saw the burning of the dead bodies of the people who have been killed about the city during this period. They carried them all outside the city near the river bank. We also saw one man tied to a tree, being tortured. We don't know what he had done but we had no way to help him. We have now received permits to close our hospital doors and fix the place up again. The soldiers that are living there have promised to leave Tuesday. One would hardly recognize it as a hospital now but perhaps it can be fixed up again. At least we'll try.

A man just now left who formerly cooked in the school here. He was captured by Chinese troops first and then later by Japanese troops and used to help the army along. His experience of first meeting the Japanese soldiers is most interesting. He said he was so badly scared that he could not talk; so he fell to his knees and asked the Lord to guide him and to help him talk. The soldiers stood by until he had finished praying and when he arose he was surrounded by soldiers with their knives out but they did not strike him. They examined him and found that he carried no weapons; so they had him help them along to Taiyuan. He said they treated him very nicely and protected him. This man was just an inquirer about Christianity before but today he came asking for Christian pictures to put in his home. He spoke in no uncertain terms about what God means to him.

Friday morning I was called out of bed at 5:00 A. M.

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by some newly arrived soldiers breaking out the window frames of our gate house to build fire with. They were very cold and since it was dark they could not see the sign on the door. But when they found out we lived here they stopped. Friday evening we started to have worship service each evening at seven o'clock for the folks here in our court. All who can attend and there certainly is a new interest in Christian worship these days. Also, yesterday the Catholic Father who is in charge of a small mission in the west part of the city came to talk with us about all co-operating to help the poor and homeless as soon as conditions become such that they come back. A lot of lines that once seemed so definitely to exist break in times of crisis. But reports say that another county seat about thirty miles from here was bombed yesterday; so we don't seem to have reached the end of the war yet by any means. We wish we could send this letter to you tomorrow as was our regular custom before the war started but we don't have any assurance when that will be possible again. However, the trains are traveling again between here and Peiping hauling army supplies and we hope that mail service will soon be resumed. Amid all the conflict we have never had greater peace and assurance in our hearts that we are doing the Lord's work and that His "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end" is for us a great truth.

November 30—Tuesday Night

Yesterday was spent hauling two more loads of coal, and

starting to haul millet from a near-by store on the ox cart. Today we continued hauling until stopped by a Japanese official. We had contracted for one hundred fifty bags but got only seventy hauled. We want it to feed those who will have nothing to eat this winter. Yesterday the Frenchman came back and today his wife and family arrived from Yutze, the place to which they had gone during the war. This is a most interesting family and they are staying with us tonight. The man came here more than thirty years ago to help with the railroad and has been here ever since and has two wives—one Chinese and one Japanese. The Japanese is his first wife and the one who is here with him. She has given birth to no children, but they have one girl (Chinese) that they bought, and a boy by his Chinese wife, which the Japanese woman has taken for her own to raise.

This man has lost over a hundred thousand dollars' worth of things in the last two months. Tonight the family has only the clothes they have on their backs, plus two houses that are so completely destroyed they can't live in them and they don't want to go back to their home because they say the memory of what it was once like is too much to face in view of what it is like now. But they will have to go back. There is no other way. They will still be better off than thousands who have no home to go back to. In my tour of the city today to help people I saw many people who have come back to live and signs of some reconstruction work going on. These signs cheer us a bit. But today some issues between this reconstruction

committee that we have been sponsoring and some of our church members came to a head and became apparent to us foreigners; so we had to be peacemakers and make some very definite decisions. We trust they were made right and for the good of the kingdom. Then too, there are two brothers living here in our compound, both of whom came in because of the war. Tonight the younger one came asking us to help them come to peaceful terms. Last night a man who recently moved in because of the war beat his wife until some other men had to stop him. He was beating her because she had cursed his mother and then his mother threatened to commit suicide because she was cursed. One would think that with so much war on the outside everyone would live peaceably in the compound, but human nature will produce some peculiar situations, even in China.

'T WAS NOT IN VAIN

*They were taken from our midst,
We know not how or why.
Some evil powers there were at work,
God's purpose to defy.*

*We know it was not His own plan,
His thus to take away,
But in His plan He'll use their death
To lead men in His Way.*

*The sorrow that it brings to us,
And to their closest Friend—
He'll use it too, to bring in us
His kingdom without end.*

*For all are children of our God,
But many go far wrong,
And others suffer for their sins,
Oft both the weak and strong.*

*Christ suffered most for this world's sins,
And now we, too, may share
The sufferings of our Lord and Christ,
If, with His help, we dare*

*To say to God our Father,
"Lay not this to their charge,"
And thus help bring for Christ our King
Peace to the world at large.*

—Martha Neiderhiser Parker, Ping Ting, China

Things We Remember

TRIBUTES FROM CHINESE CHRISTIANS

Note: The following words of appreciation from Chinese members, printed in the Gospel Messenger, will show more clearly than others can state, in what high regard the three missing missionaries were held. We have Sister V. Grace Clapper to thank for the assembling and forwarding of these tokens of loving remembrance.

Our dear friend, Sister Neher, was with us nearly fourteen years. Her heart was filled with love for Christ and the church, and everyone of us was warmed and helped by her example. She worked very hard in order that the seeds of the gospel might be sown in every place. Her love for others was so great that we always knew we could depend on her to help us when we met with any difficulty. About five years ago she came across a little girl out in a village, who was very ill with rickets and also treated very badly in the home. She asked them if they would give her the child, and they were only too glad to do so. She took the child home with her and brought her to the hospital for medical treatment. In a few months her condition was much improved. Sister Neher was a real mother to this ill-treated, forsaken child, which proves that she had the love of Christ in her heart. She has now gone

to her reward, and in a year's time I could not write about all her good deeds and her kind helpfulness, but let these few words suffice to let the reader know that she was greatly used to glorify God among us.—*Mrs. Y. T. Hsing, R. N.*

Our very new friends, Brother and Sister Alva Harsh, were with us only a short time, but long enough to reveal to us the love of Christ in a great many ways. Soon after their arrival in our town, they found a wretched, poorly clad beggar boy, ten years of age. Bro. Harsh took him home, cleaned him up, and put new clothes on him. They brought him to the hospital every few days for treatment, for his body was full of sores. They kept him in their home and taught him every day. Was not this the love of Christ? When our town went through the siege of war last fall, they did their very best to help and comfort all who were in distress. There were more than a hundred refugees in the mission compound; so the name of our Lord Jesus was greatly glorified at that time. Their last act of kindness, so far as we know, was to go out at night to help others, and they never returned! We are sure that their work on earth is done, and that they have safely arrived at their heavenly home.—*Dr. Y. T. Hsing.*

As I sit musing in the twilight, suddenly the sound of foreign footsteps breaks my meditation. I look up and see a young American couple approaching my door with smiling faces, and I recognize them as our friends, Brother and Sister Harsh, who, just one year ago, were suffering with us the horrors of war. They seem to be calling me

to come out, and I make ready to go, but alas! the vision vanishes, it was only a dream, and they are not there! Then my imagination travels back about two years, when these young people left their parents, homes and loved ones to come to China. Little did they dream that they were coming to a place so desolate, so void of comforts as ours has been during the last year! Their bravery, their loving, genial dispositions, and their sacrifice move me to tears! How they loved their Lord and inspired others to love Him, and how brief their stay among us! Their earthly work is already done, and they have gone to a happier clime, where there are no more sorrowing and no more tears. May their parents and loved ones not grieve for them, for they are now happy in their heavenly home!

With a gentle, loving nature free from strain, and an unusual poise in times of danger, Minneva Neher as a shadow is always before my eyes. For long years she toiled and suffered and rejoiced with the Chinese people. Her chief thoughts were for others, and she was lavish with her love and helpfulness in time of need. Widows and orphans, the poor and needy, were constantly on her heart. I knew her only two years, but her example of faith, love and courage I shall never forget. Who follow her example can never be lazy or discouraged; neither can they love the world.—*Anna May Wang (Wang Hui Min), teacher and evangelist.*

Sister Neher was a real enthusiast in evangelism. She loved to bring sinners to repentance, and to teach Chris-

tians the Jesus way of life. I have been a Christian for eight years, and her teaching and example have greatly enriched my life. She never shunned any hardship required for carrying the gospel to the country districts. She had the spirit of sacrifice if anybody has, and her life was a real inspiration to us.

Brother and Sister Harsh had an unusual love for the church—even gave their lives for it. They have been a real inspiration to us, and their example we shall all try to follow.—*Wang Kuo Ju, a layman.*

Sister Neher's whole life was a fulfillment of our Lord's commandment, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." The works she did at the little outstation of Chin Chuan will certainly follow her. She turned many to Christ, and the home life of our church constituency has been greatly enriched by her patience in teaching our illiterate women and our children.

Brother and Sister Harsh are splendid examples of "losing one's life for Christ's sake and the gospel's," and we are sure that in so doing they have found eternal life.—*Huo Yu Kou, lay evangelist.*

Sister Neher worked in the Show Yang district for nearly fourteen years, and her constant prayer was for a real revival in the Show Yang church. It was her delight to see Christians, new and old, make progress in their spiritual lives. She could not rest her heart until non-Christians whom she had contacted had also made her Christ their Savior. Leaving home comforts behind, she spent months at a time laboring to lead the country people

to Christ. She "counted not her life dear unto herself."

Brother and Sister Harsh were at Show Yang only a short time, but they made a great sacrifice for the church in that time. Our heavenly Father considered them worthy to suffer for His sake. I shall never forget their sacrifice and shall exhort others to follow in their steps.
—*Pastor Chao Fu Ling.*

Sister Neher worked in the church at Show Yang for many long years and it has been my privilege to help her in her home. I think I knew her through and through, and I feel that she was like her Christ in word and in deed. I was very much helped by her, and through her kindness I learned to understand the grace of God.—*Keng Shao Hsien, Christian servant in the home of Sisters Neher and Clapper.*

Dear Miss Neher and I worked together for nearly fourteen years, and perhaps I know better than anyone that she never cared for or considered herself when working for the Lord. She was a true witness for Christ and led many to Him. During our terrible siege the latter part of last year, her great and loving heart spent itself in caring for the refugees. In her own home she prepared food for them, and thus gave many "cups of water" in His name. Brother and Sister Harsh were with us for about six months, preparing to work for the Lord, but they laid aside their language study in order to help care for the needy and the homeless during the siege. Their work, scarcely begun, is already done, and they have won their crowns.—*Mrs. Kung I Teh, Bible woman.*

The young and the old, the rich and the poor, the city people and the country folk, all loved Sister Neher, and greatly appreciated her efforts in trying to help them and lead them to Christ. Brother and Sister Harsh were with us only a short time, but long enough to win our love and set us an example of real, practical Christianity. They are gone and we surely miss them.—*Li Cheng Wang, gatekeeper at Show Yang mission compound.*

After the fall of our city last autumn these three servants of the Lord braved many dangers for the safety and comfort of their Chinese neighbors and friends, and in the end laid down their lives. "Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." When the conquering army came in, the Harshes served as gatekeepers for the mission compound for three or four days and nights, and without sleep. Later when the refugees came pouring in, when people were many and supplies few, Brother Harsh himself went out and brought grain in and hauled coal for the refugees.

Sister Neher lived and worked at Show Yang for nearly fourteen years, and she often said she would be willing to give her life and all that she had if that would make the Show Yang church grow and prosper. The Lord saw fit to have her do this very thing, and we believe the Show Yang church will grow and prosper because of her sacrifice. She had a great heart of love, and she dispensed this love unstintingly. Widows, orphans and illiterate women were her special care, and she found great joy in preaching the gospel. On the night of December 2, 1937, she, with

Things We Remember

Brother and Sister Harsh, was called out of the compound to mediate in a quarrel in the home of a neighbor, about three quarters of a mile from the mission, and they never returned. They apparently fell into evil hands, and were never seen again, but we know that they have laid down their crosses, taken up their crowns, and are now singing with the angels!

The Show Yang church has been tried by fire, but we know our God will not look lightly upon the shedding of the blood of these three righteous people. We thank God that because of their bravery and sacrifice, at least one hundred people were saved from danger, and we trust that many souls may yet be saved because of their sacrifice. The faith of the Christians has been deepened, and they are going out boldly to witness for the Lord, and non-Christians are understanding the love of God as never before, because these three gave their lives in efforts to help others. Our church has truly been "bought with a price," and that price, the blood of many Christians, both national and foreign, as well as the blood of Jesus Christ. Shall we not believe that this church has a great future, and shall we not press on in His name, to make it worth the wonderful price that has been paid for its redemption?—*Yin Chih Hsiang, language teacher.*

TRIBUTES FROM MISSIONARY FRIENDS

Bulsar, India, March 9, 1938

Dear Fellow-Missionaries in China,

The missionaries in India assembled in our annual

mission conference send you Christian greetings.

We wish to express our sympathy to you in the loss of three of your fellow workers. Also to send our appreciation for your willingness to remain by the work even in the face of danger. We also pray for the Chinese Christians during these days that they may be kept faithful, and that there may be a greater and a more glorious church in China. We also pray for the ones in the homeland, the parents and relatives of our three fellow workers, and your colleagues who are detained at home.

Many of the things of this life we do not always understand; but we do know that to those who love God, all things work together for good.

May you all be kept in health and strength as you minister to those in need. God bless you all to His honor and glory.

With Christian love,

B. M. Mow, chairman

Laura M. Cottrell, secretary

Like Spikenard, Very Precious

Mary Schaeffer

Show Yang, China

Minneva was always the same, tolerant of the opinions of her fellow workers, sympathetic with the people among whom she worked, giving the underdog the benefit of the doubt, loyal to her friends. She went all the way in consecration and sought deep spiritual experiences. She

was a girl who had to experience things for herself. She liked detailed work, which helped her to be thorough in her teaching. During her second year in China, we lived together and I saw that she would go far in her work, because of her faith in God and her confidence in herself and in others. She was always confident that strength would be given for every task as it came along, yet she was very unassuming in her work. She was a good committee worker, able to think on all sides of a question. In country work she identified herself with the people.

While I never knew the Harshes before they came to the field, I had met Mary a few times in the States. Alva was of a joyful disposition. He was not afraid of taking responsibility, or of hard work. He was consecrated to his task regardless of difficulties in the way. When they disappeared many of the Chinese friends said, "Alas, they were so promising and devoted."

In meeting Mary one was impressed with her happiness; she was always smiling. In looking through some of Mary's things, I was impressed with the care and thoroughness with which she did everything. I have heard much praise of her from the Chinese here at Show Yang. Even though she was here for only four or five months, she made a lasting impression on all she met. One of the workers said: "Mrs. Harsh was good in everything: in her home life, in her relations with others. She was a deeply spiritual Christian. In every conversation she seemed to have the aim of being especially helpful to the one to whom she was speaking. She gave herself to folks."

Radiant Lives

Mary Gauntz Cummings

Peiping, China

It was in the mission board room at the Community Building in Hershey, Pennsylvania, that I received a first and lasting impression of the Harshes. Bro. J. J. Yoder, the chairman, had asked each of the four newly appointed missionaries to China to tell why he or she felt called to the task. Both Mary Lou and Alva told of childhood dreams that had one by one been realized, until the door of opportunity had swung open and they were about to realize the fulfillment of their precious God-given dreams.

All through our comradeship, whether traveling, studying or playing, both of their faces were radiant, and their hearts filled with enthusiasm as they enjoyed the thrill of "living in the land of dreams come true."

While sight-seeing they were careful to miss nothing that would enrich their experience. Their study of the Chinese language and culture was entered upon in the same spirit. And they lost no opportunity to make friendly contacts with fellow students of both races. That their friends were many was evidenced by the large mails they received.

Sharing seemed to be the motto of their lives. No matter what the request, they did it willingly, glad to be of service. Recently, it was my privilege to visit Show Yang and hear from the lips of friends there what Alva and Mary Harsh had done for them, and what a blessing they

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had been to the work there. Their home is empty, but their spirit abides to bless and challenge us in China as well as you in America.

Greater Love Hath No Man

Myrtle F. Pollock

Ping Ting, China

Theirs was a blessing we should all crave—to be on an errand of service for our Lord—and then just step over the threshold into His presence. How good of Him to have permitted it to be so. No mutilated body to lie for weeks upon a sick bed, no deformed or crippled body to hinder the intent of an energetic worker. Thus three beautiful and self-surrendered souls, Minneva, Mary Lou and Alva, have stepped into His presence to be with Him.

How well people are known by their footsteps! It would be quite impossible not to know that many dear village friends have continually said, "She is coming; I hear those footsteps." And how much more those never-ending echoes of her voice as she told them of Christ, their Savior—their salvation! How beautiful! Minneva was well equipped with the attributes of a true servant of the Lord, and souls in remote places have found a loving Savior and an eternal hope and peace because of her. Hers has been the privilege to broadcast the news from heaven, and her work will carry on and on. She still lives among those whom she loved.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay

down his life for his friends." Minneva and Alva and Mary Lou have proved to all that they had the greatest of all love—that they laid down their lives for their friends. We give praise for such as these—who have thus glorified their Lord.

We Are on Holy Ground

Anna M. Hutchison

Liao Chow, China

When we approach this subject we feel as if we are on holy ground, made sacred by martyr blood.

Although it was not my privilege to meet and personally know the Harshes, yet from all we have heard of them from fellow missionaries and from Chinese friends who had learned to know them at Show Yang, we realize it is our loss not to have known them. And for the loss to the mission in the going of the Harshes and Sister Neher only our Father can compensate.

Words are feeble to express our appreciation of them, and of Sister Neher. She was a faithful, conscientious fellow worker for more than ten years. Their worth can be fully measured only by Him who has taken them to Himself for a higher and greater service. We bow humbly to the will of the One who in His providence overrules all.

Our Show Yang Friends

J. Homer Bright

Show Yang, China

Each day we are reminded many times of our three

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friends who were taken away so suddenly from the little Christian group. Others came to take their places as soon as word of their mysterious disappearance was known, and two months ago I joined the two ladies who had been alone for four months except for a visit or two from Crumpacker and Parker. Many are the stories and deeds of love and words of encouragement given during those months of uncertainty.

Minneva Neher will be greatly missed by her colleagues in mission councils. She was, at the time of her disappearance, acting mission secretary. We first met the Harshes at the Annual Conference from which they were appointed to China. We were happy that China was to get the services of this fine young couple. During their short time in Shansi they endeared themselves to both Christians and non-Christians, and they were a great help to Sister Neher during those strenuous days. We praise God for their influence, which lives on in our Christians here at Show Yang. May we as their colleagues emulate their devotion and consecration.

In Triumph

Frank H. Crumpacker
Ping Ting, China

Minneva Neher joined our China mission in the fall of 1924. It seemed that every minute from that time until the end she was bubbling over with enthusiasm for the work to which she had dedicated her life. She was assigned to one of our most difficult posts and from

the beginning she entered into the work with an enthusiasm that certainly meant victory. She was conscientious to the last degree. Nothing seemed too hard for her to undertake. The days and weeks were all too short for her. Only once did she come near a physical breakdown. Her friends were alarmed for her for there seemed to be no such thing as slowing down. But she took the needed rest and her reserve came forth so quickly that she was soon back at the job with the same enthusiasm as of old. The combination of Senger, Flory and Neher seemed to mean long life and hard work for her.

She was slow to see the shortcomings in others, and she was fair. In many committee meetings when the problems were so hard that all felt there was no way out, then Minneva would say, "We can pray over it and if it is worth having, the Lord will give us a solution." She was so impartial in problems that involved others that one felt when she suggested a solution it was a fair one for all concerned.

Her love for the people among whom she worked made for her a host of friends. Her kindness knew no bounds. She loved humanity and proved it to the women of Show Yang. Many came to me after her death and said in substance: "What can we do now that our leader has been taken away?" They felt that she was their inspiration, and now that she was gone they felt the loss keenly. Her life went out as she had lived. It was a victory.

She lived so intensely and so unselfishly that it was

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easy to count her friends by the hundreds. She was a friend with whom one could visit and want to visit again.

She loved her church and often expressed herself to the effect that nothing could break her fellowship with the one influence that she felt was worth while in the world. Her prayer and devotional life was a reality and she often told the writer that she could do without food for her body, but she must have her spiritual refreshment at least daily. Her life was deeply spiritual.

Now that we think her work is finished, it remains to be seen how the Lord will use her influence in the Show Yang community for many years to come. In her first speech to her associate missionaries after her regular furlough she came to us with a challenging message on Venturesome Faith. This was a part of her life, and to the very end this life of faith had possession of her.

Heaven will certainly be made more cheerful since she is there. The China mission is better for having had her for about twelve years. May the Lord carry forward the influences of her precious life on the earth.

In Loving Memory

Gerald R. and Sylvia Zimmer
Tungjen, Kewichow, China

Note: The following is a copy of a letter written by Evangelical church missionaries. The letter disclosed that the Harshes and the Zimmers were good friends while in language school in Peiping. It was dated July 3, 1938.

Dear Christian Friends:

On any morning think of:
Stepping on shore and finding it heaven,
Of taking hold of a hand, and finding it God's hand,
Of breathing a new air, and finding it celestial air,
Of feeling invigorated and finding immortality,
Of passing through a storm to calm,
Of waking up and finding it home.

This lovely poem was given to us by Mary Lou and Alva Harsh in our train letter to be read as we left Peiping a year ago last June. They left Peiping one week before we did. We hated to say farewell because in nine short months at language school we had come to love them dearly. But we left them with plans of spending our next vacation together and meanwhile sharing our interesting experiences by letter.

In February we received word they were missing. Our hearts have bled over the news. Our first months in this lonely and backward province were more joyous because we knew they were having similar experiences at their station in Shansi. We continued writing even after letters quit coming. Lately letters have been returning. In one of the last letters we had from them they said they could not get letters to their folks in America. I immediately wrote and asked them to send letters to us and we would send them to the United States. But that letter was returned unopened.

We lived across the hall from them at the College of Chinese Studies. Surely God had His hand in this. Mary Lou and I soon found we had mutual likes. We shared

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our choice poems, letters and experiences. We discussed our problems together and I always felt she understood. When we had a special need for prayer we often went up to the roof of the dormitory and prayed. As we turned our faces to the starlit sky and prayed we knew our heavenly Father heard! For all these precious experiences together I am thankful.

To you friends at home whom we have never met, we feel we have a mutual bond because God has entrusted us with a great sorrow. How I wish I could write to each one of you whom we came to know through letters shared with us by Mary Lou and Alva. Across the miles we extend our heartfelt sympathy to each one of you. Theirs was a life lived with Christ. They were being daily led by Him and we know He would let nothing happen which was outside His divine plan for their lives. May God call young people from your church and other churches to fill their places here in war-torn China!

Surely the end of their story must pierce the hearts of the guilty! My heart sings when I think they have gone on ahead of the rest of us and have passed through "storm to calm" and have found peace and joy in the presence of our King. As long as God permits us to work for Him here in China we will work more devotedly and earnestly because we were privileged to walk for a short while down life's road with them.

I close with another poem which they put in our train letter:

Thou goest thy way and I go mine;
Apart, yet not afar;
Only a thin veil hangs between
The pathways where we are;
And "God keep watch
'Tween thee and me,"
This is our prayer;
He looks thy way,
He looketh mine
And keeps us near.

As we walk along China's bleeding and broken highways we are strengthened by the inspiration of their lives because they are close beside us.

Tribute From a Missionary Companion

V. Grace Clapper
Show Yang, China

They seek in vain who seek for you,
You "are not" for God took you;
In vain do they their search pursue,
And say they, "God forsook you"?
Ah, no! He knows the eagle's flight,
He marks the sparrow's fall—
And could he on a dark, dark night
Ignore thy trusting call?

When young women choose the foreign mission field for their lifework, they are not permitted to choose their life partners, but are located with reference to the particular needs on the field, rather than with any thought of congenial companionship, and in many cases they have

not even met until they find themselves shouldering responsibilities at the same station, and sharing the same home, without regard for preferences. Fortunate indeed are those who under such circumstances find themselves co-partners with those whose religious beliefs, temperaments, and dispositions are well suited to their own. This does not mean, however, that temperament, likes and dislikes must be identical, for frequently we find that opposite temperaments supplement rather than antagonize.

It was at the Calgary Conference in the spring of 1923 that Minneva Neher and I first met. She was then under appointment to China, and I had just returned for my first furlough after five and one-half years on the field. Our common interest made it easy for us to get acquainted, and we climbed into an automobile where we had a soul-refreshing visit, after which we were no longer strangers, and thus began a comradeship which continued for fourteen years—a friendship which developed into a spiritual kinship, making us more than relatives in the flesh.

Providence was kind to us and when I returned to China I was happy to find that Minneva and I were to become one "household." We had a cozy little apartment on the second floor of the foreign residence at Show Yang, Brother and Sister Harlan Smith and family occupying the first floor of the same building. In temperament we were not alike, but when separated by temperamental differences, we were quickly reunited in the realm of the spiritual, for religion was our common ground. Minneva's faith was the type that is rarely duplicated.

She never lost her grip on God, and seldom lost confidence in individuals. She believed what people told her until they had proved themselves untrustworthy, and even then she was always ready to forgive and begin over again. Her confidence in people was always a silent rebuke to me, for I was constantly seeing axes to be ground, and wheels that needed more water to make them go, when people suddenly became loud in their profession of religion. She had hope for the most hopeless, and never gave up, though she was often heavily burdened for those who seemed to have "missed the way." She was generous to a fault and her great loving heart took in everybody, from the wealthy official class to the beggars on the street. A little hunchback girl, whom she found in a village twenty miles from Show Yang, was the object of her tender care for about four years. She had been shamefully treated by those who should have protected her; so Minneva brought her home with her because nobody wanted her! She was calm and unruffled in the most trying circumstances, and never seemed conscious of the passing of time when trying to help somebody. She always found time for any task that she deemed her Christian duty; she took all the time needed and was never hurried, even though the midnight hour was fast approaching, and she had to prepare bag and baggage, cot and bedding for an early start to the country field the next day. Her life motto seemed to be "This one thing I do," and she had the happy faculty of forgetting everything else until that was accomplished, while the rule of *my* life seemed to

be "These sixteen things I *try* to do." She was Mary-minded and such I longed to be, but found myself to be Martha-handed, and, far too often, "careful and troubled about many things," nevertheless glad to entertain and serve our Royal Guest. Like that Mary of old, Minneva longed for a deeper spiritual life, and had an insatiable desire for spiritual power, that she might be a real soul winner. Her prayer slogan was "Deeper Yet," and she was ever ready to pay the price of the blessing she craved. Shortly after I left China last summer she had the privilege of attending a revival meeting in Tai Yuan Fu, conducted by Dr. John Sung, one of China's leading evangelists. She seemed to have been wonderfully blessed at this meeting, and here I quote from her letter written last August:

There is no doubt now, I have the Master's fullness of love, of faith, of joy unspeakable. His table is spread before me just for the taking. Never before have I been able to accept this wonderful gift in faith, though I have been seeking it, and hungry for it.

Minneva's work as director of the evangelistic band for the country district kept her away from home much of the time, and when she returned to our home at Show Yang after an absence of one or two months, there was always much to tell of the things that had transpired in the country as well as at the station. On such occasions we lingered long over the teacups, or the coffeecups, unburdened our hearts to each other, for there were new joys to relate, shocking disappointments in the outcome of our carefully made plans, and there were funny things too to tell, over which we both reserved the right to laugh

heartily, for both of us had eyes to see and ears to hear the humorous aspects of our work, and we shared both the serious and the humorous phases. Sometimes it was the unfaithfulness of trusted workers which kept us lingering at the Throne of Grace to the wee small hours of the night, but we always knew there was no time lost on such occasions. Her work in the country district was largely with the women, though many men attended the general meetings and were touched and brought to Christ through her consecrated life, and many of our Christian men in the Show Yang territory can tell you how their lives have been blessed through her influence, her splendid example of faith, courage, and loyalty to Christ.

We had dreams of a little Chinese home built on simpler lines than our foreign dwelling, a place where we could live more simply and be one with the common people, but the change for her was even then "just around the corner," and it was to a mansion rather than to a Chinese cottage.

Among my belongings, on my departure for America last summer, I found a neatly wrapped package, labeled, "To be opened on the Yellow Sea." At the designated time I opened the package and found a beautiful gift, the last one from her, and the following little stanza which brought the tears to my eyes:

Good luck to the ship that bears you away
Over the deep blue sea,
And God speed the lucky ship
That brings you back to me.

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And now—

My heart is sad for a phantom ship
Has borne *her* away from *me*;
By cruel hands she was put ashore
On a wild and stormy sea;
But the hand that ruled the waves was kind
And she didn't miss the way,
So not *back* but *across* to her
That good ship must carry me.

Her work on earth is done, and so suddenly and mysteriously were she and her two companions transported from this tenement of clay, that we can not but think of Enoch, Moses and Elijah, those faithful servants of an earlier day. Just how, and why, and when, and where, may forever be questions in our minds, until the glory of that New World bursts upon our sight as it has already done for them. One thing we do know is that the "sweet chariot" one night, "swung low," took them in and bore them away. It must have swung very, *very* low to find them where the powers of darkness had lured them! The sorrow in our hearts is but a memory of happier days, and "earth has no sorrow that heaven cannot heal." May their sacrifice and their devotion inspire us to nobler, grander living for Him, and may heaven heal the wounded, broken hearts of parents, relatives and friends in the West, and in the Far East!

None knew thee but to love thee,
None named thee but to praise!

TRIBUTES FROM SCHOOL FRIENDS

Tribute From a College Roommate

Margaret Belle Spangler

To me Mary is not dead. Every day she lives with me in my work and in my dreams. The sweetness of her association is not past, but very present. I am using the lessons she is teaching me.

First, Mary is teaching me that dreams come true if one does all in one's power to make them come true. I remember her telling me that she had resolved to be a missionary because of a dream which she had one night. In this dream she heard some little children from across the sea call to her, and hold out their hands to her. At the time of her dream she was probably only a child, but she could not forget it. She thought they were African children. She determined to be a missionary, and in her choices she took no step that would close the door to that call. At the time of her marriage she and Alva felt that their work lay in West Virginia, for it was the call of mountain mission work that thrilled and challenged them. But finally that dream of being a missionary came true. Sticking to a dream of an education, of religious training, of missionary service resulted in dreams fulfilled for Mary. It will also in the lives of others.

Mary is teaching me that prayer changes things. Mary had the habit of spending some time in the morning watch as well as in the evening devotions. This was not just a temporary custom, but one that she continued

through the years. I know that much of the time her devotions were definitely planned. Sometimes she had a prayer list, spending a night or a morning for each member of the list. Other times she had a map which was marked for definite prayer. Seeing how prayer illumined her life, I know it can illumine the lives of others also.

Mary is teaching me the lesson of accomplishing things by sacrificing for them. She accomplished things because she counted not the sacrifice too great to attain them. Her comfort, her strength, her pleasure did not matter—the task to be done was the thing that mattered. Many people would think that sitting up all night to pray with a dying person was a task for a nurse or an older and more experienced worker, or that going to services three times on Sunday, leaving in the morning and not returning till night, was not necessary for a minister's wife; or that spending one's best energies in working up a mission-study program for an evening each week for a handful of girls in mission study was too much to ask. But sacrifice has had its results in her life. It will in others.

Another lesson she teaches me is that the greatest and sweetest fellowship and love that people can share is working out some project together. I remember my associations with her so vividly and treasure those memories as precious because she was always planning something interesting for us to work out—maybe a vacation school in which we would tent out for the night and use an old schoolhouse for our vacation school, or maybe it was an original play to be worked out, or a program to be

given, or a picture to be painted, or a dress to be made. Our years together were never drab. Mary was so alive. Mary's and Alva's associations would never be drab: they would never have time to tire of their association together. If working together on a worth-while project—be it a life project or a series of temporary projects—can keep associations sweet and new every morning for them, it can for others.

I shall always feel Mary's influence and be refreshed by her life. She was so alive the years we were together that to me she is still and will always be alive.

His Spirit Lives On

Earl H. Kurtz

Wilmington, Delaware

With many other of Alva's fellow students, I am deeply grateful for having known and lived with him during part of our college experience.

While in college, Alva was one of the busiest men on the campus. He carried a heavy class schedule and yet had time for many extracurricular activities. He was always busy doing something but was never too busy to help some fellow student along. Many of us considered him as an older brother. When we had problems we went to Alva, and never was he too busy to help us with them. It mattered little what type of problem, we could always depend on Alva. It seemed he always had a little extra time to do a good turn. As one fellow student said, "I

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asked a lot of Alva, and it was very seldom that he refused because he didn't have time. I think back of it all was a very keen sense of values; he put first things first, and then budgeted his time according to the importance of the task."

Alva tried to be a friend to all, and do his part in all things. Another fellow student said, "He was always willing to take time from his busy life to share with us our cares and difficulties, as well as to rejoice with us when glad. Many a day was brightened, strengthened, enriched, and inspired by thoughts and prayers he gave at morning watch services." Not only did he share his time, but he always was willing to share anything he might be able to share.

One can not help admiring him for the radiance of his life. He was so thoroughly a Christian, and yet so entirely human. He helped many of us to see that the principles of Christ were applicable to everyday living.

It seems difficult to believe that a person with such fine possibilities should be required to lay down his life at such an early time. Upon being asked whether he thought it a sacrifice to go to China, he said, "I do not think of it in terms of sacrifice, but rather in terms of service." I believe that it was in this same spirit that he laid down his life.

Even though we shall never see Alva again, his spirit lives on to inspire other young folks to dedicate their lives to sincere Christian living and to do their part in carrying the torch of Christ and the living religion to

the uttermost parts of the world. His spirit lives on as his contribution to us.

In Memoriam: Minneva J. Neher

John I. and Roxie S. Coffman
McFarland, California

In the spring of 1919 there were three graduates from the Bachelor of Arts department of La Verne College: L. J. Lehman, Minneva J. Neher, and John I. Coffman. When Minneva was home from China on her first furlough she made this remark: "I do not think there are many La Verne classes with a record like ours—one third in heaven, another third in pastoral work, and the other third in the foreign mission field." This was characteristic of Minneva. In some more or less definite way her thoughts were always ranging in the varied fields of the Lord's work.

There was in her thinking a deep-seated interest in the work to which every Christian ought to dedicate his life directly or indirectly. This interest in the kingdom of righteousness did not come to her suddenly. Soon after she entered college it became evident that her heart was in the foreign mission work. The biographies of such men and women as Hudson Taylor and Miss Fidelia Fiske found a warm place in her life and added fuel to the missionary impulse.

The religious element in her life was very marked. She was most conscientious in the keeping of the quiet hour each morning with the Lord. Throughout her college

years she was faithful in attending the Sunday school and the church services morning and evening, and took an active part in the Student Volunteer Mission Band. For a time some of the girls had the privilege of teaching the English language to a Chinese lady living near La Verne. Minneva counted it her happy privilege to have her regular turn in this labor of love.

She was studious by nature, but that did not rob her of a fun-loving disposition. The social life of the college was entered into with zest, and there was little coaxing needed to secure her participation in the customary (or extraordinary!) college pranks. Such a variety of interests in life made Minneva an easy character with whom to work and no doubt helped very definitely in the necessary adjustments required on the mission field.

There was no undue haste in the preparation for her lifework. She wanted to get ready to do it well. This thoroughness, together with her native ability, made her a valued worker in her chosen field. That she succeeded is attested by those who had the privilege of hearing her missionary addresses during her furlough. Many were deeply impressed with her absolute sincerity, her spirit, her insight, and her ability to deal with the missionary problems in a very practical as well as inspirational way. We heard many here in her home district of Northern California express themselves to the effect that her messages were second to none in the insight they gave into the work abroad.

It is beyond the bounds of our thinking as to why so val-

ued a soldier of the cross should be called upon to lay down the armor so early. But we have an abiding conviction that her characteristic trust and faith in the Lord can not have been disappointing to her. Our loss can be nothing less than her promotion and exaltation to a more glorious land of endeavor.

A Tribute to Minneva Neher

Grace Hileman Miller

La Verne, California

Sister Minneva Neher dedicated her life to the service of the Master long before she went to China as a missionary and proved the same by letting her light shine brightly so that her schoolmates in high school and college saw her good works, her trust in and love for her Savior and thus they themselves became interested.

While a student at La Verne, Minneva, in her quiet yet powerful manner, always supported "every good work" and set a wonderful example "going about doing good" down in Mexican town where she seemed to have an understanding heart among the girls who ever found her a sympathetic friend, in the ranks of the Volunteer Mission Band where she was a real pillar of strength, as a teacher in the Japanese night school, and in the missionary program of the church in general.

I especially remember Minneva's work in the Japanese night school where La Verne College students and other consecrated Christian people gladly gave an hour to

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teaching the English language provided the student would remain for the hour of Bible instruction afterwards. As director of this project, she came to my rescue more than once when I needed help with an especially difficult student. Though she was carrying a very heavy program, she always arranged to give time to the night school program in a most effective manner. She was always available for consultation and never lost the viewpoint of the opportunity the night school afforded for leading the Japanese student to the Lord Jesus Christ.

As we think of Minneva, we are moved to a deeper consecration of our lives to the service of our Master and are inspired to go forth with renewed courage and vigor.

Ever Willing to Pay the Price

B. S. and Laura E. Haugh

Teachers, La Verne College, La Verne, California

Miss Minneva Josephine Neher graduated from La Verne College in the year 1919, outstanding as a lover of learning. This characteristic was manifest not only in classwork, but through activities such as debating clubs, lyric clubs and mission band.

This eager ambition to learn was not selfish in nature, for she wanted increased power that she might the better help others. While on her last furlough she entered our storytelling class. She remarked at the first recitation, "I'm so eager for ability in this line; I think it will be my most helpful method in teaching my Chinese women."

We found Minneva very willing to pay the price for knowledge. She was a hard-working student, whose attention to smaller things was not easily diverted. If leisure time she ever knew, it was used in activities helpful to her or for another's benefit.

It is a benediction to any college to have within her walls personalities like Miss Neher, who, as did she, hold high the moral and spiritual standards among the students. The college annual said of her, while she was in her junior year—

Minneva Neher

She whose inborn worth her acts commend
Of gentle soul, to human race a friend.

Lives With a Constant Challenge

A. C. Baugher

Elizabethtown College, Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania

We recall with pleasantness the college days of Brother and Sister Alva Harsh. Their scholarship and their steady interest in the church were a constant challenge to other students. Alva and Mary demonstrated their interest and ability in the many missionary programs of the Student Volunteers, the Ministerium and the summer young people's conferences.

Any college may well consider it a great privilege to guide young people who come from Christian homes where the law of love is the rule of life. Alva and Mary came to our institution with the principles of the Master

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as the foundation for their lives. It is a pleasant college opportunity to guide further such young people into a full service of the Christ.

The lives of Alva and Mary Hykes Harsh are a perpetual memorial to buoyant Christian service.

My Estimation of Alva's Friendship

A. Stauffer Curry
Westminster, Maryland

From the time we met in our first year in college, until he last visited our home in August of 1936, contacts with Alva had a great influence on my thoughts and plans. In fact it was he, more than perhaps any other one person, who sowed the seeds which finally grew into my entering the ministry. And there are others who, like myself, were led to solutions of life problems through his suggestions and advice. He was one of the most talented persons in dealing tactfully and influentially with other folks that I have known; when a project was planned, he could put it across in spite of initial opposition. He inaugurated a number of new activities on the campus.

Athough not a mystic or unusual religious philosopher, he had a practical religion of a rare sort. It showed itself in a perennial optimism, respect for the other fellow's personality, and willingness to assist everybody. And the consecration which dominated his spirit was in no way better shown than in his going to China. His ambition had always been to do work in America, rather than abroad.

But when the Mission Board corresponded with Mary and him, it was not long until they had decided and become enthusiastic to work in China.

Tribute From a Church the Harshes Served

Carl H. Welch

Petersburg, West Virginia

Looking back to the time when Brother and Sister Alva Harsh served our church as pastors, we are deeply impressed with the memories of their beautiful service among us.

It certainly is true that Brother and Sister Harsh found their way into the hearts of the members of the Petersburg and Greenland congregations during their two years in the pastorate here. Though their term of service was short, they accomplished untold good.

Sister Harsh organized the women's council at the Brick church, and the men's work organization at Petersburg looks to Brother Harsh as its founder. He saw, moreover, not only the great need, but also the possibility of erecting a church in Petersburg. A lot was bought and the type of structure planned. But thus far their dream remains unfulfilled. We still use the courthouse. However, some of us have the faith to believe that the efforts of Brother and Sister Harsh in behalf of a place of worship here can not have been in vain.

Brother and Sister Harsh made a profound impress upon these churches. Their influence still lives in the

Things We Remember

hearts and lives of those whom they loved and whom they served so faithfully. It was a mutual relationship, for it would be hard to find a people having become more attached to their pastor and his wife.

We should also note the relationship of the Harshes to the other churches. Not only our own people but also the members of the other denominations held them in high esteem. Brother Harsh often visited in their homes. He was secretary-treasurer of the Petersburg ministerial association. He gladly helped in the promotion of inter-denominational activities such as vacation Bible schools, leadership training schools, and union church services.

The Harshes were held in such high esteem by the entire community that during the union revival meetings held last February, a special half-hour memorial service was held in their honor.

The following editorial is taken from the county paper. It reveals the estimation in which Brother and Sister Harsh were held by the people who knew them throughout this section:

Before me is a picture of Rev. and Mrs. Alva Harsh taken at the time when they were married, for she was dressed in her wedding gown. It is the picture of a handsome, hopeful, happy couple. Their lives were consecrated to the service of their God. Today they are no longer with us. Their going is shrouded in uncertainty. Such are the mysteries of life.

Those of us who were their friends can not help but believe that their faith and sacrifice leave such an impression that we will take to heart more seriously the cause for which they gave their lives. They were young, full of the joy and vigor of life, ambitious, talented, educated and capable of success in almost any line

of endeavor; yet they left America and dedicated themselves to what some people call a life of extreme hardship and self-denial. What more impressive sermon could be preached on the existence and power of their God than their lives here and the sacrifice there?

RESOLUTIONS AND MEMORIALS

Resolution of the General Mission Board

(General Mission Board Minutes, April 1938)

THIS being the first meeting of the General Mission Board since the tragic and mysterious disappearance of three of our missionaries at Show Yang, China, we desire to make the following record on our minutes:

On the evening of December 2, 1937, there came an urgent call for help to a family living near by the mission compound. The three missionaries, Minneva J. Neher, Alva C. Harsh, and his wife, Mary Hykes Harsh, responded to the call, later securing permission from the proper authorities, as the community was under military control of the Japanese at the time. Our missionaries never returned from this errand of mercy and service, and up to the present we have no definite knowledge of what happened and who may have been responsible for it. While it is difficult to believe that after the lapse of nearly five months they can still be alive and shall return to their work, yet we cherish that hope until more definite information assures us otherwise.

Meanwhile the board and the whole church join in sincere sympathy with the families of these young and talented workers as well as with the comrades in the China

Things We Remember

mission who feel the grief of this mysterious and sudden loss of these friends.

If, in the future, we must accept the fact that they have made the supreme sacrifice of their lives in their devotion to duty, we know that it was made in love for those they served and with a brave faith in the Lord who called them to this service. We must believe therefore that the Loving Father will overrule this tragedy for good to all those who are "exercised thereby." May it give the whole church a larger awareness of the place and necessity of sacrifice that we may attain fruitfulness and victory in the kingdom of God, even as did Jesus on Calvary.

Board Members: Otho Winger, president, J. J. Yoder, H. H. Nye, L. S. Brubaker, Nora Rhodes, R. D. Bowman, J. K. Miller, C. D. Bonsack, secretary

Memorial Prayer at Missionary Convocation

(General Mission Board Minutes, April 1938)

Voted to have a brief service in connection with the missionary convocation in recognition of the missing missionaries.

Near the close of the great missionary service on Monday afternoon, June 13, 1938, at Lawrence, Kansas, the large audience was led in prayer by Otho Winger. He remembered the three lost missionaries, praying that if still living they might be restored, that if they had made the supreme sacrifice we might be reconciled.

Memorial to Missing China Missionaries

(General Mission Board Minutes, April 1941)

Voted to accept the following memorial to missing China missionaries and ask the committee to proceed as planned, to place the bronze plates in the board room and in their home churches. Words on the plates:

In memory of Alva C. Harsh and wife, Mary Hykes Harsh, and Miss Minneva J. Neher, missionaries of the Church of the Brethren who mysteriously disappeared from their station at Show Yang, Shansi, China, December 2, 1937, the church provides this memorial that the full measure of their devotion to Christ may not be forgotten.

Memorial Service at Eglon, West Virginia

Esther Fike, Church Correspondent

Eglon, West Virginia

A very beautiful and impressive memorial service was held at the Eglon church on August 7, for the missing missionaries, Alva and Mary Harsh.

They both belonged to the Sunshine class, and to them Christianity was not an irksome task but joy in the Holy Ghost. No sacrifice was too great to be made for the Master whom they loved and served. They were both born and reared on farms in the great outdoors.

Alva was the oldest son of Brother and Sister Jesse Harsh. He was born September 29, 1910. During his early childhood days he was always interested in things pertaining to the church and its program. It was apparent to the church that he was a born leader; so the

Egлон congregation placed him in the ministry at the early age of seventeen.

Whether in heavy school duties or wherever, the urgent appeal for preparation for greater work in the ministry or to be of service in whatever way possible seemed to be his happy ambition.

He attended Bethany Biblical Seminary in Chicago and while there he served as president of the Sunday-school class and was vice-president of the Young Men's Association.

While attending college at Elizabethtown he was a member of the intercollegiate debating team. He was also business manager of the college annual.

He was vice-president of the Y. M. C. A. and president of the local student volunteers of the Church of the Brethren. Later he was made president of the college debating association and also of the college Sunday-school class. He was business manager of the lyceum course and president of the Y. M. C. A. He graduated from Elizabethtown College in 1934.

Mary Hykes Harsh, daughter of Brother and Sister C. S. Hykes of Hagerstown, Maryland, was born August 25, 1903. Her active Christian life began at the same time her husband began preaching. Mary's biographer said there were three things in which she would venture far—knowledge, friendships and God. Completing the eighth grade in the neighborhood school, she became the pioneer of her neighborhood when, with the consent of her parents, she pulled from home ties and entered col-

lege at Elizabethtown. She completed her academy work of three years in two, taught four years and returned to college again, and when in 1928 the goal seemed just in sight she was told she could not graduate since she had only two years in academy work. But Mary, equal to the occasion by taking examinations at the department of education at Harrisburg, passed in time to graduate with her class.

After receiving her Bachelor of Arts degree she taught a year in the Ephrata high school. She left this enviable position to spend two winters in Bethany Biblical Seminary, where she received her master's degree in religious education.

Being a member of the Volunteers, she was elected secretary of the Eastern United States Volunteers' Union.

While in Chicago she taught in the Chinese Sunday school and in the Parental School and assisted in Cook County Hospital work, the Oak Forest County Home, the Blind Institute, and the Gospel Loop Mission.

June 6, 1934, this happy couple was joined in matrimony in the Broadfording church amid daisies and ferns. From this time they were one in purpose, serving two years in the Greenland, North Fork and Petersburg congregations.

From this field they were called by the General Mission Board of the Church of the Brethren as missionaries. On the field in language study and in all their work they were signally successful. They sailed to the field September 12, 1934.

When hopes were running high the destructive work of war drew a crepe of gloom over the scene, and when on an errand of mercy and peace, like their blessed Master, they who had pledged their lives first to their Master and then to each other disappeared mysteriously, leaving nothing but a well-spent busy life and memories of smiling faces. Since the curtain has fallen we may rest assured the Lord will care for his own.

Elder Charles D. Bonsack, secretary of the General Mission Board, of Elgin, Illinois, was in charge of the memorial service, assisted by Emra T. Fike and Ezra Fike.

Church Named in Honor of the Harshes

(A news note in the Gospel Messenger for February 10, 1940)

October 1, 1939, we dedicated our new church building, which has been named the Memorial Church of the Brethren in memory of our former pastor and his wife, Brother and Sister Alva Harsh, who lost their lives on the China field. A large crowd attended these services. The speakers of the day were Brethren C. D. Bonsack, E. E. Muntzing and Ezra Fike.—Mrs. Carl Welch, Petersburg, West Virginia.

(A news note in the Gospel Messenger for December 12, 1942)

Our church was built in memory of Alva and Mary Lou Harsh, who so nobly answered the call as missionaries to China, where they gave their lives for Christianity. Three years ago in October our church was dedicated.—Fleta Sager Sholee, Petersburg, West Virginia.

Unveiling Service at La Verne, California

A memorial service, which included the unveiling of a bronze plaque, was held Sunday morning, May 31, 1942, at the Church of the Brethren for Miss Minneva Neher, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Neher, who disappeared while serving in the China mission field, on December 2, 1937. Two other missionaries, Alva and Mary Harsh, disappeared at the same time and conditions in the region were chaotic because of Japanese infiltration.

The inscription on the plaque reads:

In memory of Alva C. Harsh, Mary Hykes Harsh, and Miss Minneva Neher, missionaries of the Church of the Brethren who mysteriously disappeared from their station at Show Yang, Shansi, China, December 2, 1937, the church provides this memorial that the full measure of their devotion to Christ may not be forgotten.

It was received on behalf of the congregation by Dr. C. Ernest Davis, elder in charge. The plaque was presented to Miss Neher's parents and they in turn presented it to the church, Mrs. Neher selecting an appropriate place in the foyer to place it.

Addresses were given by the Rev. John I. Coffman of McFarland, whose wife, the former Roxie Snell, was an intimate friend of Miss Neher during their days together at La Verne College; and by Dr. Davis. Favorite hymns of Miss Neher were sung by the college quartet.

The service brought the challenge that life can be beautiful and victorious and that greatness comes by loving service done in Christ's name.

Things We Remember

The Glory and Grandeur Which Belongs to Broadfording

E. Russell Hicks

Hagerstown, Maryland

(Article in the Gospel Messenger for September 12, 1942)

July 12, 1942, will long be remembered by many as a high-water mark of spiritual glory for the Broadfording congregation of Middle Maryland. For a multitude of devout folk, Broadfording is indeed a sacred spot. In their hearts they have said, using Jacob's words, "Surely the Lord is in this place. . . . This is none other but the house of God and this is the gate of heaven." On July 12 this historic place became a missionary shrine for the entire brotherhood and a symbol of inspiration for every Christian whose fervent desire is to build the kingdom of God through our Lord's "go ye" injunction. Broadfording, steeped in missionary tradition, has to its record the honor of being the mother church of one of the three Brethren martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the cause of world brotherhood.

At two o'clock in the afternoon, this sanctuary was packed to the doors with friends, relatives, acquaintances and admirers of Mary Hykes Harsh to witness the unveiling of a bronze tablet on the front of the pulpit, not far from the spot where she accepted Jesus Christ as her Savior and dedicated her beautiful life to him. This tablet was donated to Middle Maryland and the Broadfording congregation by the General Mission Board of Elgin, Illinois. On it are inscribed these words:

In memory of Alva C. Harsh, and wife, Mary Hykes Harsh, and Miss Minneva Neher, missionaries of the Church of the Brethren who mysteriously disappeared from their station at Show Yang, Shansi, China, December 2, 1937, the church provides this memorial that the full measure of their devotion to Christ may not be forgotten.

One of the unique features of the dedicatory service was the reading of a poem dedicated to Sister Mary Hykes Harsh, written by Bishop George Keener of the neighboring Mennonite church and read by Elder David R. Petre. Two verses from this long poem are given:

Oft we plucked sweet blossoms,
Wild flowers from the hills!
Just so we wished to gather
China's loved ones to Christ's arms;
We longed to see them warm,
And fed, as well as we.
We prayed that they might be
From pain and sorrow free.

We did not know how long
Our mission work would last,
And what in God's vast kingdom
He had for us to do.
But we were willing quite
To spend and to be spent,
Till our whole life was finished,
Our bodies laid to rest.

It was a great privilege to have present at this meeting Elder Galen B. Royer, veteran missionary worker among the Brethren, and to hear him speak. In his address he called attention to the fact that Broadfording's glory was its missionary spirit, much like the missionary church

of Antioch of apostolic days. In this church D. L. Miller, in many ways the father of Brethren foreign missions, gave his life to the Lord's service. In its cemetery sleep Abraham and Catherine Long Miller, his parents. By his mother's grave D. L. Miller always knelt when he visited his old home and rededicated his life to her God. How this should inspire others to do likewise!

Not only did these parents give to the church a son who became the greatest dynamo of spiritual energy Brethren ever knew, but it was Brother Abraham Miller, the records show, who gave several gold coins, which were the first contribution of Brethren for foreign missions. Of the thirteen children born to the Miller parents, William R. became famous for his conducted trips to the Holy Land and Anna M. became Mrs. Galen Royer.

The most hallowed spot around the church is now the Hykes lot in the beautiful cemetery. Here Charles Hykes, the father, has erected to the memory of his daughter and her husband, Alva C. Harsh, an attractive marker of Tennessee marble with the following inscription:

Sacred to the memory of Alva C. Harsh and his wife, Mary L. Hykes, who went to China as gospel missionaries from the Church of the Brethren, Sept. 2, 1935. After more than two years of active service, lost their lives during the Japan-China War, Dec. 2, 1937.

The main address of the afternoon of July 12 was made by Elder R. W. Schlosser, ex-president of Elizabethtown College. Brother Schlosser built his discourse around these words of St. Paul: "Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it" (Eph. 5:25). In a masterful way he

showed what the church meant to Christ and what it meant to Mary Hykes Harsh. She was always ready joyfully to serve it. Both she and her husband were in Brother Schlosser's philosophy class. He told of their great enthusiasm for discerning new truth. . . . Mary for a while lived in the Schlosser home and made such contributions to the home life that she seemed to be a member of the family.

The audience was thrilled to have messages by two of the church's beloved China missionaries, Brother and Sister Frank H. Crumpacker. The Crumpackers spoke of the Harshes as their "children in China." Brother Crumpacker told of Alva Harsh's success as a leader and a scholar and the love the Chinese developed for him and his wife in so short a time. He explained how the missionaries were told, when their compound threatened to be in the war zone, to leave and go elsewhere, but their heroism and sincerity caused them to refuse to forsake their work even if it meant death. It cost them their lives, but God had a greater work for them to do in the next world. Sister Crumpacker spoke of Mary's great love for Chinese beauty and her example as a homemaker.

The services were further enriched by special music furnished by the Hagerstown and Brownsville churches. Brethren Roy K. Miller and E. S. Rowland led in the devotions. Some day when China assumes world leadership in the Orient, as a great Christian nation, may she not see fit to erect a beautiful monument at her main

Things We Remember

crossroads to the Harshes and others who brought the light and so nobly laid down their lives in order that China and the world might know and experience that abundant life found in Christ Jesus. The dark hour we know now may soon turn to morning. As the sun in the west that summer Sunday evening sent a glow of golden illumination over mountains, dales and hills, combining the sweetness of a shadowed radiance with the beauty of living verdure across the rolling fields, a few earnest souls, including the Crumpackers and Brethren Royer, Schlosser and Hykes, gathered around the white monument on the Hykes' lot for reverent meditation. A voice seemed to say, "She is not dead but sleepeth." To this spot will come both young and old on pilgrimages, or in front of the bronze tablet they will clasp hands and highly resolve that these youthful saints shall not have died in vain. Each will dedicate himself to the unfinished task remaining before us all, that the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ shall not perish from the earth.

Service of Commemoration

Bonnie Miller

Eglen, West Virginia

(News note in the Gospel Messenger for October 24, 1942)

Brother Frank H. Crumpacker and wife were with us September 19, 20, 1942. They conducted the dedicatory service for the bronze memorial plaque to Alva and Mary Harsh and Minneva Neher.

*On any morning think of:
Stepping on shore and finding it heaven,
Of taking hold of a hand, and finding it God's hand,
Of breathing a new air, and finding it celestial air,
Of feeling invigorated and finding immortality,
Of passing through storm to calm,
Of waking up and finding it home.*

The Mystery of Sacrifice

Almost ten years have passed since the night of the tragedy when the curtain of mystery lowered over Show Yang and our three missionaries disappeared, and to this day that curtain has not been lifted. Each year fellow missionaries and loved ones have looked forward with hope, trusting that some facts would be brought to light and some evidence revealed which would give the explanation of their death. The writing of this book in their honor and memory has been delayed with the one persistent hope that the truth should be learned. But now the time has come to print in book form an account of their life and work and the little that is known of their tragic death.

When the first missionaries returned to China late in the year 1945, after the evacuation in 1941, they hoped to learn facts which had remained hidden as long as the Japanese had occupied the Show Yang area. But the letters which have come from the returning missionaries brought little or nothing new. When they talked to the Chinese Christians they could get no clear answers for they seemed stunned and their thinking and their reactions were slow. They had passed through so much

sorrow and death themselves that only the struggle for survival occupied their minds. They could remember little and they could give nothing positive. Mary Schaeffer wrote that she desired very much to report additional evidence but that she had none to give.

Then in the spring of 1946 when Leland S. Brubaker, secretary of the General Mission Board, went to China on a deputation trip, he purposed to secure any recent information possible. But all he could say was that there were really no more facts available. He wrote the following report:

When I was in China in May and June, 1946, we did our very best to secure information concerning the disappearance of our Show Yang missionaries on December 2, 1937. I think I could say at the very outset that no additional documented information was secured. While there, we planned to ask the Chinese authorities to allow us to do some exploratory digging to see if we could discover the graves where these folks had been buried. We were just ready to approach the Tai Yuan Fu authorities when Mary Schaeffer received word that she was to go to Tai Yuan Fu to give a disposition of all the facts she knew concerning the case. We then decided that we would wait until this trip to Tai Yuan Fu had been completed. I went with Mary to the court house and was allowed by special permission to sit in the room where she was interviewed by one of the Chinese officials. A secretary took down all the questions that were asked of Mary and her answers. It was simply a complete review of the history of the case, of course, this time being documented. Mary was very careful in her answers and tried to be as accurate as was possible. The Chinese were very friendly and showed utmost courtesy and friendliness and even helpfulness in trying to secure additional information. Since that time, nothing further has been heard. The missionaries, particularly Mary, were going to try to follow through and see if they could discover whether the Chinese government was going to prosecute.

The Mystery of Sacrifice

Since the communists have come in and our missionaries have had to evacuate Shansi province I suppose that this means that any further investigation will be delayed for another period of months and perhaps years.

Such tragic sacrifice as our missionaries and our church have had to bear is certainly a portion of the suffering through which the whole vast subcontinent of China has been passing. There are periods of time in which great countries struggle through the throes of death in order to be brought to a new birth. The Christian missionary is often found in the midst of these crushing sorrows, giving himself gladly to ease the pain wherever possible, and in so doing he often pays the supreme price of sacrifice.

Doubtless if the walls about the city of Show Yang could speak they would have a grave account to give. Within their shadow terrible things have happened throughout the years, even before our church began its work there. A picture on page 145 shows a view of the west section of the Show Yang city wall and on the original picture were written these words: "Outside this wall sixty Christians were killed during the Boxer uprising."

In 1900 the Boxer Rebellion carried out its intention of annihilating the Christian church very fully in China. The blow fell heavily upon Christians throughout Shansi province and especially at Show Yang. The English Baptists had established mission work at Show Yang, but so severe was the Boxer persecution that the work was closed. Some sixty Christians, both Chinese and missionaries, laid down their lives for the Christian cause. At that

time it seemed like a tremendous price to pay in life and money in order that the truth of Christ might be made known.

Nineteen years later our people bought the buildings at Show Yang and began church work at the mission station. As the years passed by, prejudice and fear were overcome, more people entered the church, and the hearts of the missionaries rejoiced. By the year 1937, more than two hundred members were on the church roll. Then in that same year came bombings and destruction at the hands of the Japanese upon Show Yang, and the Chinese Christians were scattered and three missionaries were killed.

Nor would we forget that not long afterward great uncertainty came upon the Christians who lived at Ping Ting, Chin Chow, Tai Yuan and Liao Chow. There were forced evacuations and missionaries had to leave in order to save the lives of Chinese Christians. Terror reigned throughout the whole province and it was at Liao Chow in the summer of 1940 that thirteen Chinese Christians paid the price of martyrdom.

By the spring of 1941 all our missionaries had left Shansi province. Some returned home to America, and the eleven who remained found themselves later facing the rigor and deprivations of internment camps, in China and in the Philippines, for after December 7, 1941, they were classed as enemy aliens. Although no lives were lost, the experience during those years held grave and dangerous situations. Through it all the missionaries searched

their hearts daily to understand the meaning of injustice and suffering and prayed that they might never lose their Christian witness.

Were it not for the fact that Jesus Christ was hindered in His work, resisted when He would do good and crucified when He loved to the uttermost, it would be impossible to understand the reverses which His followers meet when they desire above all else to make Christ's way of life known. Turning back in the history of our mission work in China, we find it difficult to see why our missionaries have had to evacuate Shansi province four different times, in 1911, 1927, 1941, and 1947. In each case it has been because of fighting, either as internal revolution, or war between the northern and southern forces, Chinese guerillas resisting the Japanese occupational troops, or the communists striking against the national government.

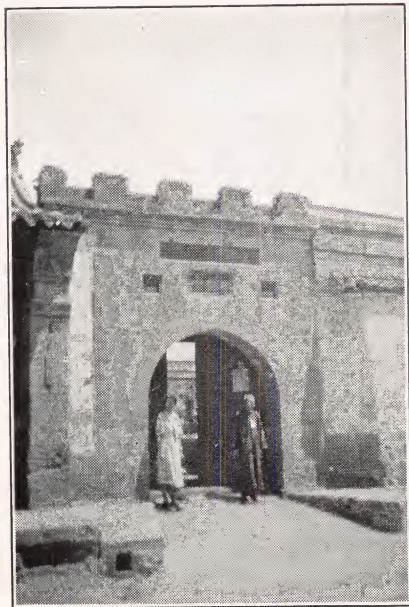
Each time it seemed an utterly impossible thing to do to leave the Chinese people as sheep without a shepherd and yet it was the only course to take in order that even worse persecution might not overtake the Chinese Christians. And through all these vicissitudes the Chinese church carried on and Christians were given faith to testify that although they had suffered tremendously they had also learned to know the depth of the grace of God.

Even now in 1947, as this account is being written, our twenty-three missionaries who are in China, who have gone out in hope that they might return to their former field and carry on the work of the church with renewed

zeal, find the door in Shansi closed before their faces. Fighting continues in the center of Shansi province. The need for the service they would gladly give is greater than ever, and yet they are not permitted to remain in Shansi. Many calls are coming from other areas all over China for our missionaries to help them. Right now they are praying earnestly to know God's will clearly. By faith we wish to believe that within the next year or two the scattering out of our missionaries over China, even to the far distant province of Szechwan, will prove a blessing both to our church and to the missions wherein our missionaries will serve.

When the veil of mystery is finally drawn aside, if so be that this shall happen within our lifetime, then shall we know better and understand more clearly why our efforts to reveal Christ in China have met with so much resistance, why missionaries have had to leave their work, why some Chinese Christians have been martyred while others have been scattered, and why three beloved missionaries had to give their lives.

It must be that some die and pay the supreme price in lifeblood to win a great land like China for Christ. Although we may not be able to understand, yet as a church we acknowledge that in God's wisdom He will use all our effort to the great ends which He ordains. We must walk by faith and not by sight, confident that God intends some great good to follow. We rest the case with God, putting our trust in Him and praying Him to strengthen our human weakness.



Show Yang Compound Gate



View From the Gate

The gate that swung in to let the three missionaries out on the night of December 2, 1937, and never opened to welcome them back



Show Yang City Wall



Show Yang From the City Wall



Show Yang Evangelists
Mrs. Wang and Mrs. Kung



Old Mr. Li
Gateman for the Show Yang Compound



Show Yang Residence Where Minneva Neher Lived



Minneva Enjoyed the Snow When Trees and Buildings Were Clad With Frost



Show Yang Compound in Winter



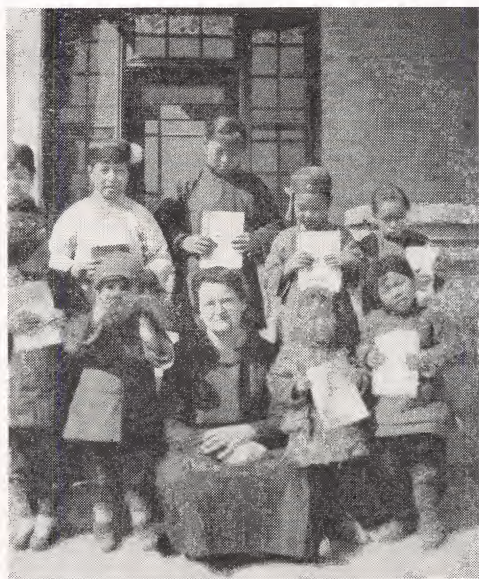
Minneva's Sunlit Room
Her desk just as she left it on December 2



Minneva Neher, Mrs. Kung, Mrs. Hsun
Show Yang Women's Workers



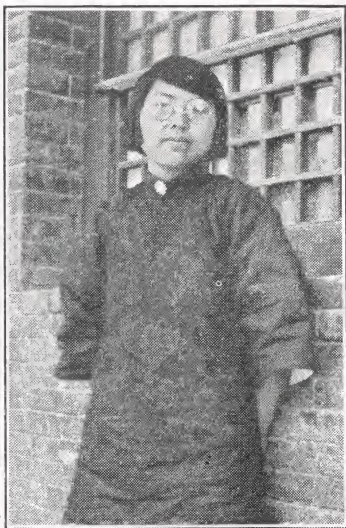
Show Yang Church



Show Yang's First Beginners' Sunday-school Class
Minneva Neher, Teacher



Li Jung Lien, the Crippled Girl (Center)
With Playmates, Lloyd Smith and Chou
Meng En



Kuo Shu Hui



Ministers and Deacons of Show Yang Church and Their Wives, 1934



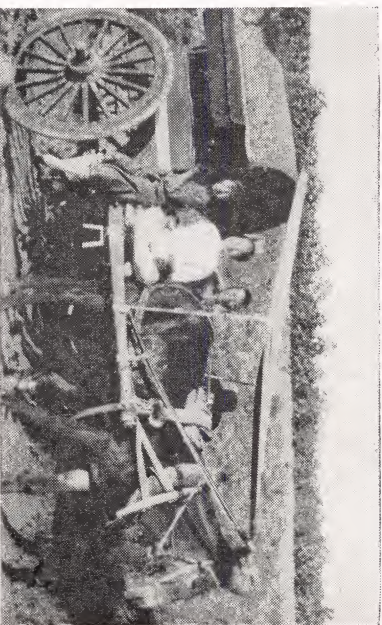
Show Yang Kindergarten Children



Women's Class at Show Yang, 1930



China Annual Conference Missionary Group, 1937

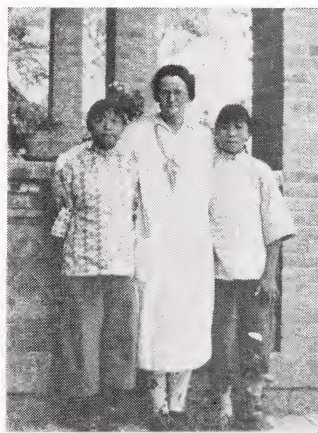


Minneva's Traveling Companions

Minneva on left side of steps. Mary and Alvin on the right side



Minneva, Esther Kreps, and Leland and Marie Brubaker
Eating Lunch on Wall of China



Minneva With Two Schoolgirls



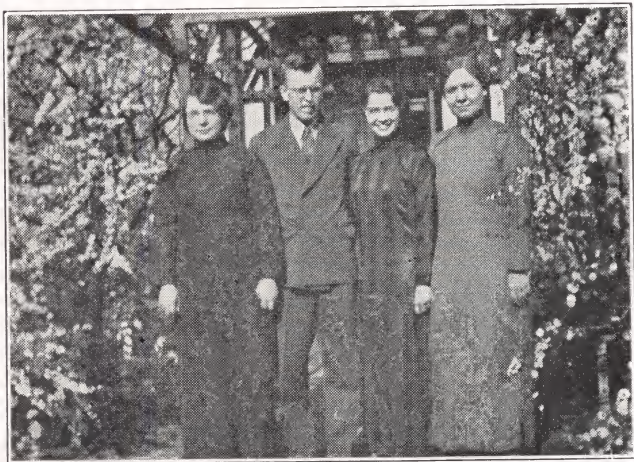
Minneva Holding Wei's Baby



Minneva and Kindergarten Group



House in Which the Harshes Lived at Show Yang



Four New Missionaries for China, 1936

Mary Velma Ober, Alva Harsh, Mary Harsh, Mary Gauntz



Mary and Alva Harsh



Mary Harsh and Sylvia Zimmer
Language School Friends



Memorial Arch in Central Park, Peiping

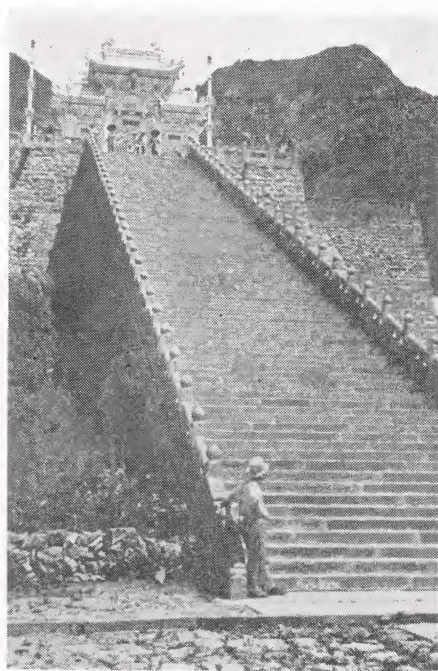


Cherry Blossom Time in the Summer Palace



At the Ching-Liang Shui Temple

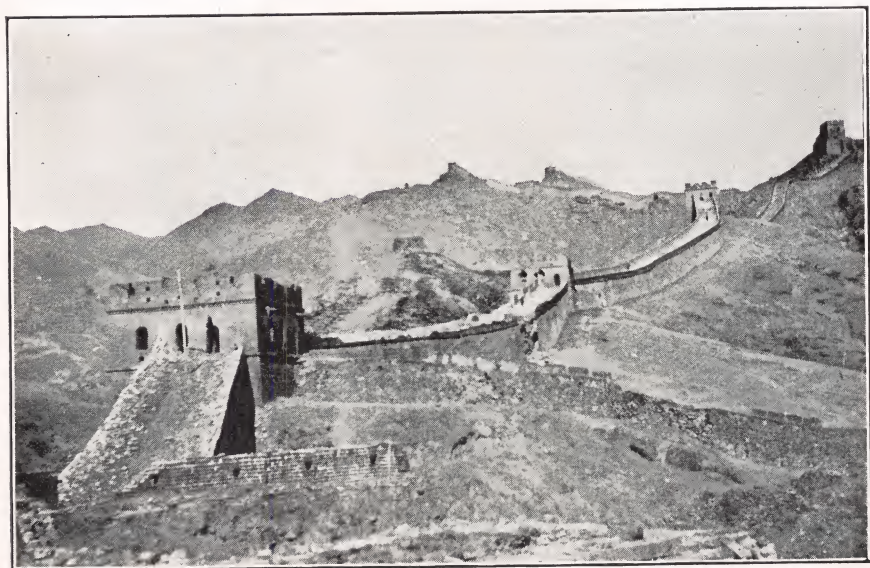
Minneva Neher is at the center front, Alva and Mary Harsh sit on top of the huge balancing stone



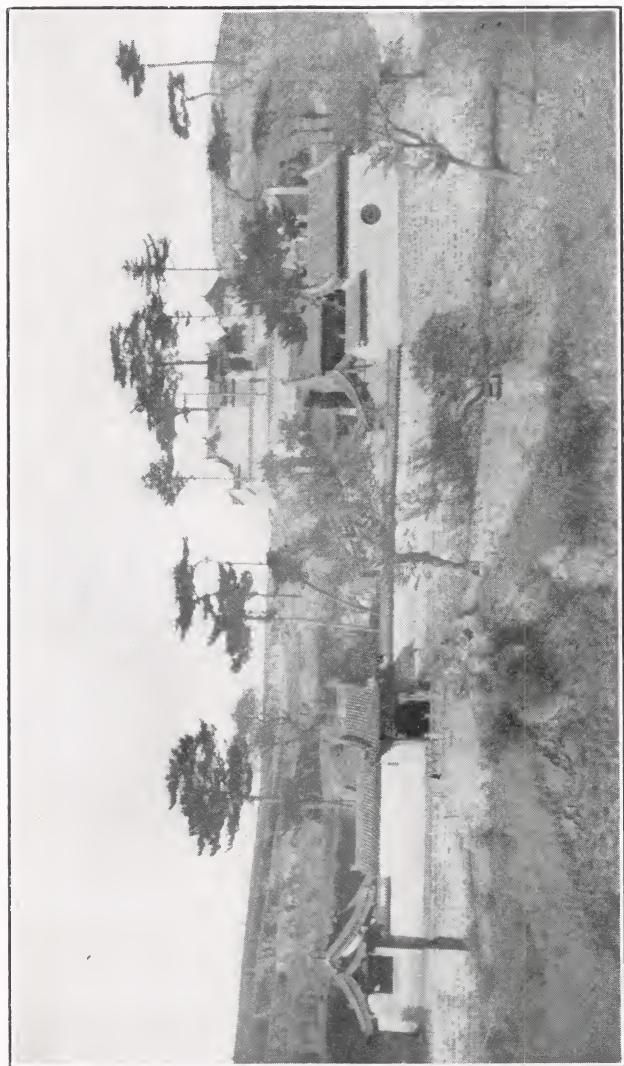
**Missionaries Climb Steps to the Dragon
Spring Temple, Lung Chuan Ssu**



Terraced Hillsides



China's Great Wall



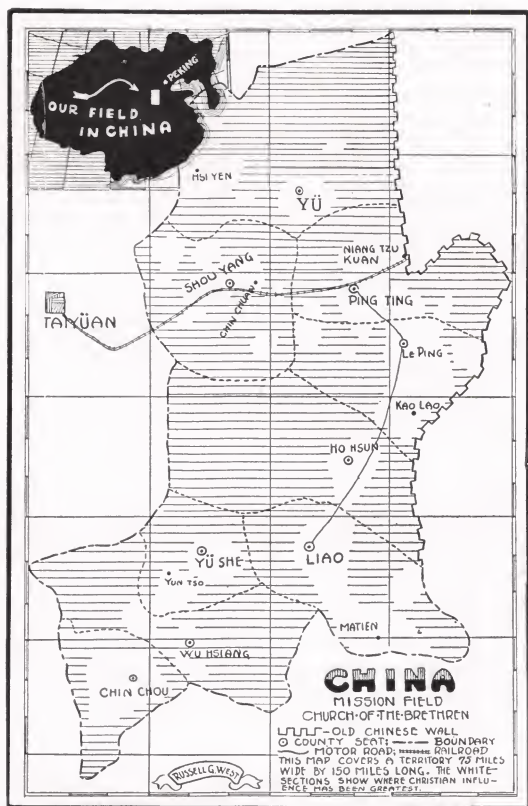
Temple at Show Yang



The Last Picture of the Three Missionaries
 Taken a few days before the tragedy by a soldier who
 claimed friendship with them



**Arches of Stairway to
 Show Yang Residence**



Map Showing Area in Shansi Province
Occupied by the Church of the Brethren
From Show Yang to Peking, 450 miles
From Show Yang to Tai Yuan, 90 miles

THE MEMORIAL OF

JOHN

1844